BOROVGH
OF·CHELSEA
METROPOLITAN
PVBLIC·LIBRARY
THE TRUE UNIVERSITY OF THESE DAYS IS A COLLECTION OF BOOKS
1887
1900
DOMINVS
NI
FRVSTRA

W.W.B.

1903.

3/6

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/musingswithoutme0000anna

MUSINGS
WITHOUT METHOD

942.
0813

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD

A Record of 1900-01

BY

ANNALIST

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MCMII

All Rights reserved

Hz354
36940

I42.08

CONTENTS.

FEBRUARY 1900.

PAGE

One man, one book—The use and abuse of diaries—A record of trivialities—An herbarium of poets—Another Whig—The abuse of nicknames—Pantomimes new and old—The tradition of the East—The patriotism of Fleet Street . 1

MARCH 1900.

A love of false news—Why France hates England?—An unflattering portrait—France and the war—The cheap Press of Paris—Falsehood breaks no bones—England's ruin Germany's triumph—The benefit of an alliance—Our Universities—Cambridge in the nineteenth century—The Cambridge of Gunning 16

APRIL 1900.

The Queen's visit to London—A peaceful conqueror—The demeanour of the crowd—The fury of a mob—The *Théâtre Français* in ashes—Its incomparable tradition—A simple stage—Loyalty to the past 31

MAY 1900.

The attempt of Sipido—The character of the Anarchist—His sanguine temper—Herbert Spencer and murder—Anarchy a fashion—The Anarchy of letters—Irresponsible biography—"A modest coterie" 42

JUNE 1900.

Mr Pinero and his critics—The right of criticism—The Royal Academy—The Relief of Mafeking—A splendid siege—R. A. M. Stevenson—Undergraduate and student of art—"Spring-heeled Jack" 55

JULY 1900.

The Paris Exhibition—Vulgarity the privilege of to-day—A taste of arrangement—The unity of nations—The Exhibition, and after—The Republic's love of kings—The *clou* of the Exhibition 68

SEPTEMBER 1900.

Figureheads of emotion—Homage to Lafayette—Cromwell-Grandison—*Les nations alliées*—The French Revolution in America—Belgium's levity—Political crime—The extradition of Anarchists 81

OCTOBER 1900.

Clifford *v.* Grundy—Literary somnambulism—The criminal plagiarist—A plea for plagiarism—Virgil—Molière and Dumas—The masterpiece of the century—Miss Corelli's genius—The Wicked Markiss—A portrait of the author . 93

NOVEMBER 1900.

The process of Election — The folly of canvassing — The ignorance of voters—The spirit of the people—The farce of Democracy — A House of Oligarchs — Democracy in letters—How to write—Instructions to Young Authors—T. E. Brown, Poet and Letter-writer 107

DECEMBER 1900.

Camp-followers of falsehood—The War Correspondent—Calumnies against British officers—Censure of the censorship—The uselessness of the correspondent—The only remedy—W. T. Stead and "a British officer"—Mr Stead's regret—The last days of Napoleon—The Jacobin point of view—In defence of Sir Hudson Lowe—Napoleon's table-talk—The Emperor's theology 123

JANUARY 1901.

Autobiography—Pepys and Montaigne—The Amir of Afghanistan—"A witty and humorous genius"—A sleepless administrator—The character of Abdur Rahman—The autobiography of action—The autobiography of thought—The search for truth—The confidences of Gibbon . . 141

FEBRUARY 1901.

The return of Lord Roberts—The philosophy of the crowd—The Federation of Australia—England in decay—Hysterical remedies—The study of modern languages—The purpose of the Universities—The attack upon Greek—The Universities useless—Undergraduate or *garçon de café*—An apology for the classics—The champions of French . . 155

MARCH 1901.

Victoria the Great—The disrepute of the throne—The trade of kingship—The Queen's statesmanship—A constitutional monarch—Divine right—Arms and arts—The Victorian Age—The Queen's death—The grief of Europe—A naval pageant—In St George's Chapel 169

APRIL 1901.

Literature at the Universities—The complaints of poets—Pedagogic neglect—Literature unteachable—*Literæ Anglicæ*—Taste no science—Ragbags of literature—The real lesson of our Universities 185

MAY 1901.

The Candid Friend—His dangerous jeremaids—Foreign competition—An ambassador's opinion—The critics of the Army—The libels of Austria—The proper doctors of the State—Mr Childers' Life—The wisdom of the Queen—Mr Gladstone's baneful influence 197

JUNE 1901.

The shadow on the stage—What ails the theatre?—A retrospect—Actor and Author—The Actor's victory—The Player of to-day—The absurdity of realism—The reform of the stage—The Théâtre Français in London—M. Maeterlinck on the Bee—The drama of the hive 212

JULY 1901.

Lord Milner and the country—The vituperation of the Press—The support of the Government—The history of South

Africa—The sacrifice of Sir Bartle Frere—Mr Gladstone's surrender—The Bayard of the money-bag—The new ruler of the world—An arrogant Mæcenas—The danger of philanthropy—*Pecunia olet* 230

AUGUST 1901.

The worship of speed—The passion of racing—The decay of the racecourse—The development of cricket—The advent of W. G. Grace—Professionalism on the river—The Hustler in Literature—The Vandal at work—Marble Hill—Hogarth's house 247

SEPTEMBER 1901.

The palm without the dust—Lord Rosebery's lassitude—The creation of Mr Gladstone—An unfortunate influence—Lord Rosebery's popularity—Lord Chesterfield—His quarrel with Dr Johnson—His 'Letters'—His services to the State—His Irish administration—The presence of a political philosopher—Chesterfield's irony—Mr Caine and his rival—Two pilgrims—A surfeit of emotions—The Egyptian pleasantry 262

OCTOBER 1901.

The cruel murder of McKinley—The excuse of Anarchy—A guarded visitor—The punishment of sedition—The fetich of the Press—France and England—A treaty of literature—M. André Chevrillon—A French Journalist . . . 283

NOVEMBER 1901.

The need of efficiency—The appointment of Sir Redvers Buller—A famous despatch—A damaging speech—The

style and the Man—The timidity of the Government—Tolstoi translated—His independence of schools—His impartiality, and its limits 295

DECEMBER 1901.

Two years of emotion—A peaceful triumph—A proud achievement—The trace of the snail—The management of processions—Radicalism new and old—William Hazlitt—Jacobin and Anti-Jacobin—Hazlitt a partisan—His love of books, and of life—The study of a Cockney—Hazlitt's portraiture—Whig and Tory 308

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

FEBRUARY.

To plant a tree, to beget a son, to write a book—these, says the old adage, are the three duties of man. For the first two we have no word of complaint; in all sincerity we may wish increase both to the timber and the population of our native land. But we can easily spare a universal addition to our library. One man, one book, is the worst policy ever invented by human optimism; yet it is a policy which threatens to become a part of our national life. Already there are few defaulters in the field of fiction. The rare ones that have not joined what is called "the ranks of our imaginative writers" may be pointed out in the street with confidence and precision. And the reproach of silence is being removed as fast as may be even from those who have declined to enlist in the army of "fictionists." Almost everybody can (and does) write a novel; but there is positively no single man, woman, or child that cannot keep a diary; once a diary is kept, vanity and greed counsel publication; and it will not be due to good taste or reticence, if we are not presently acquainted with the pedigree, the aspirations, and the performances of the whole world.

One man, one book.

Now, to keep a diary may be a useful and noble enterprise, provided that the diarist possess both talent and discretion. But there is no reason why the simple reminiscences of an industrious public servant should be worth the paper they cover in the printing. Charles Greville cannot be quoted as a precedent. Whatever may be said in his dispraise does not impair the value of his work. Says the satirist:—

The use and abuse of diaries.

> "For fifty years he listened at the door;
> He heard some secrets, and invented more."

This may be true or it may be false. But two truths are indisputable. In the first place, Charles Greville wrote a book which is neither imbecile nor superfluous: there can be no doubt that his journals will serve the historian of the future more faithfully than the newspapers; and for all his love of gossip, he did not often stoop to record the frippish conversation of titled nobodies. In the second place, a just discretion persuaded him not to publish his work in his own lifetime, so that it first came to us in the guise of memoirs, which already "tottered on the verge" of history. Therefore we may feel towards the Clerk of the Council a gratitude that is not disgraceful, for his book is a real book, and not a shapeless mass of undigested "copy."

Unhappily the gentlemen who publish their diaries to-day are less wisely inspired than the Greville of their contempt. They do not wait for the grave to close over them, before they make their candid confession. On the contrary, they realise the demand that has been created by the daily paper, and they hasten to supply it with what slender talent they can compass. In brief, they make themselves part and parcel of the prevailing eavesdropping. The journalist has been before them, of course; it is not his fault if all his readers are not informed that Lady Blank was seen driving yesterday

in a hansom cab, or that Lord Dash has taken to a pair of white ducks and a grey hat. It is hardly credible that these pieces of information send whole districts mad with joy, whose inhabitants are never likely to see in the flesh either Lord Dash or Lady Blank. But the ideal of journalism, formulated years ago by its most daring professor, "an ear at every door, an eye at every keyhole," is so closely familiar to us that we long since docketed it among our inevitable disasters, with the influenza and the arm-chair administrator. Only we did not expect that men who by education and knowledge have a sound claim to intelligence, should emulate the profitable indiscretion of the news-sheet. Though, of course, we had no right to expect reticence in any man, we innocently defied probability, and our sanguine temper has been properly rewarded by the bitterest disappointment.

A record of trivialities.

The modern habit of confiding personal secrets to the vast mass of people which subscribes to a circulating library was first made fashionable by Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, whose 'Notes' have already filled six portly volumes, and who doubtless has material up his sleeve for another twenty. Now, it may be said at once that Sir Mountstuart is neither very indiscreet nor very illuminating. His work is merely trivial and uninteresting. We gather from his pages that he has always cherished a wild desire to fasten his eyes upon "celebrities." It has not mattered a jot to him whether the "celebrities" were writers or politicians, actors or clergymen; he liked to see them, and to breakfast with them, or to dine with them, or to chatter with them at the Athenæum. A pleasant whim, in truth, and no more dangerous to society than collecting postage-stamps or breeding Shire horses. But if it be tamely expressed in a vague record, it is appallingly dull. Turn the pages of his book where you will, and what do you find? "A large party at the

Seniors'—amongst others Cloquet, the great surgeon, Grote, and Matthew Arnold." "Saw Sir John—afterwards Lord—Lawrence for the first time." Maybe these reminiscences have their value to the gentleman who has treasured them for forty years: so might he prize the pair of boots which he wore on the occasion of his maiden speech; so the devout might hoard the Prince's Cherry-stones. But they leave us stolidly, wearily indifferent. If we may judge by Sir Mountstuart's diary, he never said a word to the great men, and they never said a word to him. They met; 'twas at the Athenæum, or at a large party, or at the Breakfast Club; they met, and we suppose they parted; but who is the wiser or better for an impertinent knowledge of the accidents which befell a politician whom they do not know? We must all dine, we must all breakfast—such is the ordinance of fate: if we keep "good company," so much the better for us; if we don't, we may at least hope to eat in peace. But why after forty years we should tell as large a mob of strangers as we can attract the trivial secrets of our life, that only the booksellers can explain.

An herbarium of poets.

For, moved either by a laudable discretion or an inevitable forgetfulness, Sir Mountstuart tells us nothing either for good or evil of the great men whose society he has frequented. Had he possessed a talent of observation, he might have composed a work which, mellowed by time, would have amused our great-grandchildren. But when he should entertain us, silence gets hold of him; and his celebrities have as much life as the flowers which he collects with a pious assiduity. One day he finds "a rocky region covered with *Spartium junceum*, *Erica arborea*, &c.;" another day "the chief effects are produced by a white Narcissus and by *Geranium pratense*." And these plants possess just as much personality as the Mr Gladstone or the M. Renan of these patient memoirs. In eloquence, the dead flowers fall not a whit

below the live statesmen and poets of Sir Mountstuart's energetic collection. Whatever enters his diary is dried and tabulated; and if the work may be described as a gallery of plants, it is also in another aspect an herbarium of living celebrities.

Now, Sir M. Grant Duff's book would be wholly unimportant if it were not a symptom of modern curiosity. It could not have been published without the hope of attracting readers, and to attract readers by so intimate a relation is tempting the people to a social sin. It is a small sin—that is true; but it is a sin nevertheless, this obstinate desire to pry into the secrets of others. And if there were not writers to betray themselves, there could be no readers to profit by the betrayal. We desire to pay the greatest honour to Sir Mountstuart's energy and amiability; we have no doubt that the speeches, which he is always ready to quote, served their purpose excellently; we can easily believe that the Breakfast Club was the most distinguished occasion for conviviality ever devised by human ingenuity. But we have no right to know who belonged to it, and who were the most assiduous attendants at its groaning board. Nor can we take the smallest pleasure in the following table, which the author modestly describes as Amphitryonic statistics:—

Summary from Oct. 14 to Dec. 6, 1886, inclusive.

Invited to dinner.	From Oct. 14 to Dec. 6.	Previous totals.	Grand totals.
Accepted	147	5977	6124
Unable to accept . .	29	1359	1388
Total invited . . .	176	7336	7512

We quote the table, because it proves, better than pages of argument, the trustful disposition of Sir M. Grant Duff. In a brief five years he invited 7512 per-

sons to dine with him! But why, oh why, should he share this Gargantuan secret with all the world?

The fashion thus set by Sir Mountstuart has been quickly followed, and we note with pleasure that his nearest rival is also a staunch Whig. Sir Algernon West, whose 'Recollections' have proved what the booksellers term "a book of the season," has taken the world into his confidence with even greater candour. Had another uncovered Sir Algernon's life with equal circumstance, the victim would have had every right to be displeased; but it is characteristic of the gentlemen who publish their diaries that they fall into the pit of their own digging with perfect complacency. Thus we learn from Sir Algernon's own book that, like Sir Mountstuart, he has always kept the best of company, and that, as becomes a good Radical and Mr Gladstone's private secretary, he has seldom condescended to cultivate a society which he deemed unworthy of him. Yet as we read his confessions we cannot help thinking that he himself is not quite free from surprise. We seem to hear a half-silenced cry of satisfaction. See how "genteel" I have always been! But certain things there are that should be taken for granted. We do not want to be told, what should be evident, that Sir Algernon mixed in the world to which he belonged. Still less are we pleased when we note that he habitually employs nicknames in a work intended not for his friends, but for the public. This freedom would be called bad manners in a journalist, and it would be so called with perfect justice. And should not a well-known official, whose profession has made him familiar with the statesmen of thirty years, uphold a higher standard of manners than the common reporter?

Another Whig.

However, Sir Algernon West seems to have spent a successful and profitable life. Eton and Christ Church were a proper preparation for the high destiny of one

who was to be Mr Gladstone's private secretary. A sojourn at King's College was a base interlude, for there he did nothing more than make "a few third-rate acquaintances" — an experience always galling to a staunch democrat. But at Oxford he easily extinguished what might have been a dubious memory, and when he came to town he was soon on terms of intimacy with all the great men and beautiful women of his day. Bobsy Meade and Georgie Gordon, and Bo Somebody Else—he knows them all, and calls them all, in print, by their Christian names. This is a greater enormity than any committed by Charles Greville, who, moreover, did not contemplate the publication of his memoirs in the lifetime of himself and his friends. Yet of Greville Sir Algernon West has a very poor opinion. Greville, says he, was supposed to have got "money from his publisher for the promise of his Memoirs." Well, why not, if he kept his promise, and the publisher kept his not to print until discretion permitted publicity? Did not Sir Algernon West get money from his publisher on the delivery of his Recollections? In fact, all that can be said in dispraise of Greville applies with greater force to Sir Algernon West. But in Greville's defence it may be said once more that he composed a sober, serious work, and that he kept it secret until its publication was attended with no disgrace.

The abuse of nicknames.

Again, says Sir Algernon West, "Hayward and Greville traded on the vulgarity and snobbishness of the society they lived in." It is a harsh phrase; but upon what else do Sir Algernon West and his like trade? They know perfectly well that a book which displays the great ones of the earth in their slippers and dressing-gowns is sure of its public; and so accurately do they gauge the common taste that their performances are discussed almost as widely as the daily paper. But there is one other inconvenience which may be pointed

out: if this practice of tittle-tattle be encouraged, who is safe? It is not everybody that likes to be called Bo or Bobsy or Georgie in print, or who cares to have the casual epigrams which he uttered at a dining-table put down in the cold deliberation of black and white. And the law will certainly need an alteration if Sir Algernon West's example be widely followed. The copyright of print is still uncertain, but if London be full of official journalists anxious for copy, the sooner that speech also is copyrighted by law the better for the casual citizen as well as for the national dignity. The very fact that a man has been admitted into distinguished society was once a guarantee that its secrets and its follies would not be blurted elsewhere. But manners are becoming easier every day, and presently reticence must be enforced by a threat of punishment.

Wherever you look you are confronted with the same indiscretion. It is not only the world of self-important private secretaries which is infected with the common vice. Here, for instance, is Mr William Rossetti, an incurable case, if ever there was one. For he adds to a deplorable candour a taste for betrayal. In other words, he is always showing up his friends in public. And in his last volume, 'Præ-Raphaelite Diaries and Letters,' he is as obdurate and indiscreet as ever. For the moment he has deserted his brother for Madox Brown, the story of whose squalid, insignificant life is told with superfluous care. What purpose is served by these idle revelations we cannot imagine; nor can we explain why Mr William Rossetti thinks it worth while to embalm the fact that once upon a time—it was in August 1854—Madox Brown had "onions for supper." On another occasion he had a mushroom for tea. Both statements leave us cold; but even if a man declines to make himself ridiculous before the world, his friends will hold him up to posthumous contempt rather than allow him to court oblivion.

So with our modern fashions and our ceaseless garrulity the ancient standard of life and manners is fast changing. Traditions are dying, and none knows what tricks or antics will take their place. And with our manners we change our amusements. Time was when Christmas was incomplete without its pantomime—a curious medley of chalk and red paint, of monsters and fairyland, of flimsy yet lustrous backcloths, and reckless, irresistible puns. Above all, it was usual in these *saturnalia* to jibe at the year's absurdities, and to touch off, as is still done in the French *revue*, the scandals of the world or the follies of politicians. But nothing is left us of the pantomime but its name—no acting, no jest, no clown, no transformation scene—nothing. Processions we have in plenty, our eyes are always dazzled with the glitter of changing lights; yet the clown is reduced to his very lowest terms, the pantaloon is no longer the genial dupe of our childhood, and if the harlequin does flourish a wooden sword, it is only for an instant, and by way of an apology. What, then, is put in the place of the old enchantments? The endless manœuvring of half-drilled women, and inapposite patriotism. The patriot is the noblest of men, when he does not degenerate into a patriotard. But we confess that we do not want to hear of England's grandeur from behind the footlights, nor do we bear with patience a lesson in politics delivered by a young lady whose pink tights are obviously too small for her. This kind of hysteria may attract pennies to the tambourine: it does not increase the dignity of our country nor the courage of our citizens. But the climax is reached when, in a certain pantomime, a dozen dancing-girls turn violent somersaults in order that, as they stand upon their heads, the union-jack may be seen emblazoned in their petticoats! 'Tis a sorry spectacle, and, if it were characteristic, we might take it for a symptom of the nation's decadence.

Pantomimes new and old.

The tradition of the East.

But tradition lingers longer in the east than in the west, and while the fashionable pantomimes are composted of music-hall airs and undesigned insults to our flag, there are distant theatres which still respect the older fashion. Go to Hoxton, if perchance you can find your way through the devious wilderness of the city, and you will find at the Britannia a perfect vision of the past. There can be very little of the music-hall in a theatre whose orchestra does not disdain that forgotten melody, "Spring, Spring, Beautiful Spring!" But that is the note of the Britannia — it is just thirty years behind these prosaic times. So that the traveller to Hoxton may rejoice his eyes with the dear, dead conventions of the past. He may see the whole strength of the company line up while the transformation scene is being prepared, until each has contributed his little song and dance, and they have all "walked round" unnumbered times. He may hear the pleasant old jests about pawnshops and mothers-in-law, which should æstivate (so to say) but which should still enjoy the freedom of the winter months. He may see fairies, suspended on obvious wires, float elegantly through the air; he may see such a transformation scene of painted cloth and lamps as would evoke a sigh of satisfied surprise from a curmudgeon. Above all, he may see a real clown and a real pantaloon, and if the red-hot poker was lacking this year, we shall look out in twelve months for its restoration to popularity. Yet Hoxton, too, has been persuaded to cheapen the emotion of patriotism: the vice, in truth, is universal; but the taste of Hoxton is miles ahead of Piccadilly; and the Britannia, at least, need not sadden us with the reflection that London is approaching Paris in sentiment and behaviour. If the speech of the Boulevards could project bullets, no nations save the French would live an hour; and if the pantomimes of London were translated into fact, a small, compact army

of ballet-girls, wrapped round with the union-jack, would even now be marching to the conquest of the world. But we are persuaded that our patriotism and courage are deeper than the doggerel of the music-halls, and that when once the unaccustomed panic be past we shall return again to quieter manners and a juster sentiment of life and war.

The patriotism of Fleet Street.

Such is our persuasion; yet we confess the weight of argument is against us. We are all patriots—of that there can be no doubt. All the journalists are patriots: they profess their patriotism in every article which they publish. Short of marching to the front, they are ready for every sacrifice—so they say. But there is one sacrifice, the easiest of all to make, from which the journalists recoil in horror—the sacrifice of garrulity. In Fleet Street alone there are at least five hundred persons competent to supplant Lord Salisbury and the Commander-in-Chief; and as these five hundred are gentlemen who do not know the vice of reticence, it is not their fault if the whole world is not by this time aware of Sir Redvers Buller's incompetence, and Lord Roberts' wicked censorship of news. They are dogmatic—are these journalists; they have no doubts; they think they have mastered the whole art of war; but they would rather see their country ruined than themselves behind in the race for news. That is the sacrifice which not one of them is prepared to make, and their vanity is the sorriest spectacle of modern times.

Now, it is necessary to remind the press that a war is not conducted merely for its peculiar use and benefit. When we accepted the challenge hurled at us by President Kruger, we were not moved by the reflection that a campaign in South Africa would mean credit for Fleet Street, and glory for the war correspondents. Fleet Street and the war correspondents are no more essential to the empire than the parasites who hope to loot our

camps; and Fleet Street and the war correspondents are the most dangerous camp-followers of all. Being servants, they mistake themselves for masters; being paid to disseminate news, they think they have a right not only to know everything that takes place, but also to comment upon it in such terms as seems good to them. And when news fails them, they turn about to abuse the War Office or the Government or the generals, or anybody or anything that comes near to their hand. They know nothing: yet their pose is omniscience; they write leading articles, which contain three or four mutually destructive statements: yet the statements are in print, and their only begetters swell with dignity. One day the Boer force amounts to 30,000. The next day any man is worse than a criminal who did not divine at the very first that the Boer force was 100,000. Fortunately the editor has a short memory, and he is careful not to charge himself with the incompetence that he hurls in the teeth of all the world. But he excites some few, poor, foolish persons in the provinces, and if only he hammers on long enough he creates a half-opinion out of manifold ignorance.

He does more than this. By collecting every scrap of news, by defying the censor, by printing the letters of private soldiers, he is able to prove himself the staunchest ally of his country's enemies. So long as he has full licence, it is idle to close Delagoa Bay. He prints the news; the spies of Kruger telegraph it hot-hand to Pretoria; and our enemies within twenty-four hours are forewarned and forearmed. What cares the journalist? He has sold another thousand copies of his paper, and so long as his circulation is secure, he will cheerfully witness the world in ashes. But even, when he has given valuable aid to the Boers, he is not content. It is still his privilege to discourage the soldiers of his Queen. He can invite complaints from every Dick, Tom, and Harry who serves in the ranks. He can collect the foolish,

miserable letters written in camp, and print them with the authority which his circulation gives him. So we have heard that a certain general has lost the confidence of his men; that after a certain engagement he narrowly escaped death at the hand of mutineers; that in future no soldier would respect his orders, &c. Now, this sent back to Africa becomes a positive incentive to mutiny. The poor fellow who wrote the letter we may forgive: he wrote in anger and discomfort. But what can we say of the editor, who, in the cool atmosphere of a comfortable room, initials this infamous piece of gossip for the printer? The journalist, in truth, desires to take all the part he can in the conduct of the war. Yet he is not amenable to the Army Act. If he were, he might receive a short shrift, for the punishment of his offence—discouragement of our soldiers—should be death.

Again, he is never so happy as when he is stirring up small jealousies. Here is a little gem, which one journal deemed it right and proper to print: "I have come to the conclusion that the English generals are lacking in sense. They affect to despise the Volunteers, who are probably the best men they have got, and it is a fact that the Volunteers have to wait for their meals until the Regulars have been served." This jewel of gossip is signed "Shrewd Observer," and it is plain that the epithet is well-chosen. It is "shrewd," indeed, to invent a foolish grievance, and send it broadcast over the world. Poor Volunteers! Do they really wait for their dinner? Of course they don't; and if they did they would be strong enough to bear the delay; but "Shrewd Observer," who ought to edit a journal, fancies a grievance, and who knows, with good luck he may have inspired half-a-dozen of our volunteers to discontent.

Of course we are a democracy, and we must act in public. But we believe that in this matter the people is higher-minded than the press. We believe that the most of our citizens would rather wait for their news than risk

the lives of their sons and their brothers. Yet the press has usurped an insidious sovereignty. Of course the people might prove its horror of shameless indiscretion by refusing to read a paper which was disloyal to the interests of the country. But our citizens are creatures of habit, and they do not easily change their journal. Nor is the offence new. Mr Delane set the fashion in the Crimean war, and to stultify a weak Government did not scruple to give the Russians valuable and acknowledged aid. But it is not by this outspokenness that we won our empire. Had Wellington fought with a mob of cor respondents and a telegraph-wire at his back, he would never have survived Torres Vedras; the Peninsular War would have been a pitiable failure; and the General himself would have been disgraced long before Waterloo was won. Yet how can we curb the journalist? How impose upon this irresponsible "patriot" the responsibility of his words and acts? By no means yet known to the law; and perhaps the method of Lord Roberts is best—send him no news, and let him employ his ingenuity in idle conjecture.

Moreover, war is a dignified and serious enterprise which should be carried on with good manners and without levity. Where the lives of thousands and the fate of an empire are at stake, there is no room for insolence and fine writing. Yet the most of our war correspondents have neither the reticence nor the tradition which would enable them to give us a modest picture of the fray. They speak only in superlatives: it is always "a rain of lead" with them, or "a solid sheet of bullets." The casual incidents of the campaign are called terrible "reverses"; and we suffered a dozen "defeats" before ever we fought a battle. And when for a moment they lay aside their extravagance, they take it upon themselves to admonish their country. So we have seen the superb spectacle of a young gentleman, who once was an officer and might know better, advising Great Britain

not to relinquish the struggle, and asking in dismay, "Where are the fox-hunters of England?" This young gentleman need not be downcast; but his example, and the example of his colleagues and their employers, have convinced us that we cannot again trust to the dignity or to the patriotism of our press. From the outset of the campaign the journals did their best to make freedom of speech abominable; and it will be fortunate for us if we conduct our next war with the wires cut behind us, and all the correspondents kicking their heels at the coast.

MARCH.

THE French nation, changeful in all else, has remained for twenty centuries constant to its love of false news. Cæsar tells us how the ancient Gauls would stop any stranger to ask him whence he came, and what stories he had to tell. And while they would shift their policy at the first idle word spoken by a traveller, they made no attempt to distinguish between the truth and an uncertain rumour. Is it wonderful, then, that the strolling traders told them precisely those falsehoods which seemed to suit the Gallic temper? As it was in Cæsar's time, so it has always been. The French love of false news is as ardent to-day as it was then. From time to time philosophers have done their best to expose and correct it. Good Master Pantagruel, for instance, as we know by the 'Prognostication Pantagrueline,' set France a good example, which unhappily she did not follow. This discreet monarch posted certain worthy persons at the borders of his kingdom, who should examine into the truth of whatever rumours were brought to his people. But the Parisians, as we know them, have throughout their history well justified their name, which, being interpreted, means the Free of Speech. Their credulity is bounded only by their imagination: if others will not tell them falsehoods, they readily invent the lie which corresponds most closely to their aspiration. And since no censorship checks the sin of repetition, they freely repeat the lie to every idler that passes their way. True, the lie is soon forgotten, but that is from no lack of malice:

A love of false news.

it perishes, without apology or regret, as soon as another, more gross and palpable, is found to take its place. The vice, a vice of folly and weakness, explains better than any political argument the present attitude of France; and we, recognising the amiability of our neighbours, may congratulate ourselves that the vice is hopelessly incurable.

Once upon a time, when France was marching to an easy victory over the forces of the German empire, a telegram was said to be posted up outside the Bourse. The front man in the crowd read (or thought he read) the news of a glorious victory. The word was passed behind him, and in ten minutes five thousand persons were prepared to swear that with their own eyes they had seen an actual confirmation of the splendid rumour. Of course there had been no victory: it is more than likely that there was no telegram. But the quick wits of Paris imagined a phantom message upon the wall of the Bourse, and were content. So lies succeeded lies, until the blood poured out by the Commune wantonly and hideously washed away the stain of falsehood. Again, whatever view we take of the pitiful *affaire* which so long divided France, one thing is certain—it was nursed and cherished in the lap of untruth. Two years ago it was France's point of honour to pin her faith to perjurers, and to applaud the sublime virtue of forgery. But though at times she has involved herself in her favourite vice, her best efforts have always been devoted to the discomfiture of those she deems her enemies, amongst the first of whom we are pleased to rank ourselves.

Why France hates England?

Why France hates England it is idle to inquire. It is enough to note that she hates us, and expresses her hate after her usual method—in falsehood. In so doing she pays us the highest compliment possible, and it is not for us to repel her soothing flattery. If France may be believed, England has devilishly contrived all the evils that

have fallen upon Europe since the ice age. We need not go quite so far back as that for our examples. The history of the last five or six years will yield us an abundant harvest. The Madagascar Campaign was a splendid opportunity for denunciation, and gossip was both busy and malicious. No sooner had France resolved upon her ill-fated expedition than the perfidy of Albion became apparent. The Minister of War having no ships at his disposal, was forced to borrow his transports in England, a compulsion which in itself was a clear proof of British duplicity. In the Mediterranean one of these transports broke down, and all the newsmongers in France drew their pens to declare that the accident was designed by the British Government. Nor was that all our sin: a club of sportsmen was formed in London, whose purpose was to arm itself with rifles of the newest pattern, and to stalk Frenchmen in Madagascar. It was a new sport, said the press, well adapted to those who are tired of big game. Now, this story, be it remembered, was invented not by a gutter-journal, but by the 'Figaro' itself, which pretends to hold aloft the banner of truth and good manners. We are not told that the sportsmen were discovered lurking murderously in the bush; nor do we suppose that the 'Figaro' deemed it worth while to correct its falsehood. But the fairy-tale was believed, and another drop of virus sped through the veins of malice.

An unflattering portrait.

England, in fact, if the Boulevards are to be believed, is an ogre of hideous mien, belching forth the fire of hate and destruction. It eats up India for its breakfast, and gulps Africa at its hasty lunch. It annexes countries merely to drive them to starvation. For instance, it is well known to Paris that when India some time since succumbed to famine, she got not one penny piece from England. The poor natives, whom we had deprived of sustenance by a policy of egoism, were saved from death by the gener-

osity of Russia. This lie, also, was published under the auspices of the 'Figaro,' despite the fact that the largest subscription known to history had been raised in London, and still awaits apology. In better taste was the rumour, which excited Paris for quite four-and-twenty hours, that the earth-hunger of England had persuaded her to annex a forgotten isle of the Channel, and that at low water the union-jack might be seen floating over a sunken rock. Then, again, it is a matter of common knowledge—in Paris—that the war between Spain and America was devised and managed solely by Great Britain, which Power again obstinately forbade the Treaty of Paris to be signed. And when peace was signed, what did England do? Why, she straightway intrigued with Don Carlos, because she thought she might just as well seize the Balearic Isles! So Britain controls the cholera and the plague, and all other diseases, letting them loose where and when she will. In brief, there is as little check upon our power as upon our wickedness, and again we accept the compliment with equanimity.

France and the war.

But the news of the war waged in South Africa sharpened the tooth of France to a fine point unknown even in Cæsar's time. Ignorance is easily acquired, and the French spared no pains to make the acquisition complete. Of course nature had equipped them for the task, since a man who could not find either England or South Africa upon the map of the world is easily capable of misunderstanding a difficult campaign. The press, then, printed and believed any travellers' tales which turned to the discredit of England. There has been no attempt to distinguish between true and false. Hurrah! shouted these valiant knights of the pen, England is in trouble! Come, let us libel her! And libel her they did and do to their own (and our) content. Ink is cheap, cheaper than courage, and so the ink of the Boulevards annihilates the British army and opens the

gates of Ladysmith at least twice a-week. The accounts of such battles as have been fought are admirably cooked to suit the susceptibilities of our neighbours. At Colenso, we are told, 800 Boers opposed 12,000 British, of whom they killed either 3000 or 5000. On another day 16 Boers kept 300 Lancers in check, and took them all prisoners. No less than 2000 English soldiers have been arrested dying of hunger in Portuguese territory, and doubtless the inference is that the same country which left India to perish of famine is quite content to starve its drunken mercenaries. Another correspondent, with the same spirit which persuaded France that Bismarck was a butcher, while her soldiers might slay without the guilt of blood, denounces Colonel Bullock as a felon, because he defended himself with a revolver against the attacking Boers. And if you would like to discover the real cause of the war, says a well-known writer, you may find it in the blatancy of Lord Salisbury, against which the courteous manners of President Kruger fought in vain. This gentleman reminds us of that other, equally well informed, who assured a credulous world that Lord Salisbury was the son of Benjamin Disraeli!

Now, this habit of lying is not bred of inadvertence; it is ingrained in the French character. Twenty times a-week the halfpenny press of Paris prints false news, whose falsity is demonstrable in an hour. For example, our ambassador lately left Paris for a holiday. Instantly a dozen sensation-mongers saw a chance of a scare. Sir Edward Monson was disgusted, said one, at the decoration of M. Léandre, the libeller of our Queen. Of course he was not disgusted. Why should he be? France may decorate whom she pleases; and we know no one more fit in taste and talent to wear the red ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur than M. Léandre. He is as little influenced by truth or manners as the rest; and his calumnies, exquisitely suited to the temper of Paris,

The cheap press of Paris.

are worthy of the reward they have won. At last, then, he is the colleague of the late Colonel Henry and of M. Judet. But that is not our point. Our point is this, that the journalists who falsely said that Sir Edward Monson was breaking our diplomatic relations with France, or had gone to Italy to beg for aid, knew, or could have known, that they lied. But the chance of knowledge does not deter them from their daily task. They still wander up and down the streets, as they did in Cæsar's day, buttonholing any loafer who will tell them the tale they would like to believe. And when the tale is told, they deem correction unnecessary. They neither regret nor excuse their falsehood, and possibly they are not conscious even now that they have been guilty of dishonourable conduct.

Such is the attitude of France; and it is for us to accept that attitude in all thankfulness of heart. That our neighbours, who love us not, should be convinced of our decadence is worth an army corps, and England has taken a far too serious view of a merely peevish habit. On the one hand we have heard a great deal about the ingratitude of France. We have been reminded that when the French lost in a single day 173,000 soldiers, 6000 officers, three marshals of France, 56 eagles, 622 pieces of field- and 876 of garrison-artillery, 72 mitrailleuses, 137,420 chassepots, and 132,326 other small-arms, we displayed a fervent and sincere sympathy. It has been recalled to our memory that when Paris was starving, we who, *teste* the 'Figaro,' decline to feed the famished Indians, brought food and comfort to the hungry. These things are true: we did show France a dignified courtesy when she was in distress; we have never congratulated ourselves on her misfortunes in her own country, in Tonquin, in Madagascar — on the contrary, we have fed her hungry and tended her sick. But these truths do not

affect the question at issue. It is misunderstanding the French character to expect gratitude. Suspicion is the answer which our neighbours give to kindness, and we have not the smallest right to resent the unfriendliness of those who have for two thousand years fed upon rumours.

On the other hand, our statesmen have gravely discussed the animosity of France, and one Minister has gone so far as to administer a reproof. He might as well have reproved a blizzard or an unstopped drain. The falsehood of France deserves no reprobation from us. After all, a lie does not last longer than twenty-four hours, and it is never worth while to complain of a blind man because he cannot see. The French, so far as the truth is concerned, are blind-eyed. You can hardly call their habit a vice. It is rather a moral obliquity of vision. It is not that they weigh truth and falsehood in a balance, and compel truth to kick the beam; it is that their hand is physically incompetent to hold the scales, and that France will never conquer a place in the world until she can steady her trembling fist. We should not be surprised even if M. Rochefort worshipped truth in secret; we can even believe that M. Drumont is in his own eyes an honest man; we might be persuaded that M. de Cassagnac, when he urged President Kruger to slaughter the British prisoners, regarded himself as a modern Bayard. Such freaks of chance and nature are nothing to us. They are the effect of one cause — that love of false news which dominates France more efficiently than Government or intelligence.

Falsehood breaks no bones.

From France, then, we have nothing to fear, save falsehood, which breaks no bones, and which need evoke no other sorrow than contempt. But when the apologists of France insist that she has nought in common with her press, a modest protest must be uttered. A press lives only on the approval of the people, and MM. Rochefort

and Millevoye would not mark every day with a black lie if they were not paid to do so. So that France cannot but share the pitiable disgrace of her journals. What, then, does it all mean? Nothing whatever. There may be a suggestion of the jealousy which a tired race feels for the race which rides upon the forward wave. But we don't believe it, because France is not even half-conscious of fatigue. No; it is idle to seek for serious causes. It is enough that France is never likely to fight us again, unless she fights, as she attempted to fight at Fashoda, under the standard of somebody else. Indeed, she is as dangerous as Switzerland or Belgium, and it is only the accident of a free untrammelled press that brings home to us in England the fret of her immaterial animosity.

England's ruin Germany's triumph.

Moreover, though the French people knows it not, the fall of England is the sole incident needed to finish its existence. But, while the press of the Boulevard is all ignorant of this elementary truth, the statesmen of France have a just perception of its importance. M. Delcassé, for instance, is far too wise to risk a rupture with the only Power whose friendship is useful to his country. When Prussia broke the power of Austria at Sadowa, France, as M. Hervé said, suffered her severest check since Waterloo without striking a blow. Yet the journals of Paris applauded vociferously the victory of Prussia. So to-day the loud voice of France clamours for the extinction of England, and the brain which is behind that loud voice does not understand that if the Boers were victorious in South Africa, the curtain would be drawn up on the last act of France's tragedy. But while the people fail to penetrate the obvious, M. Deschanel has a clear vision of the truth. The speech which he made when he was received into the Academy proved, in spite of itself, the folly of the Boulevards. Quoting M. Hervé, whose eulogy it was his fortune to

pronounce, he said: "It is only Germany that has an interest in a quarrel between England and France. To make a campaign against English policy, is to make a campaign in favour of German policy. . . . If we take sides with Berlin against London, we commit a great folly, especially as we should only tempt London to come to an agreement with Berlin at our expense." What was true then is still true to-day. The one chance that France has for the future—vague enough, to be sure—is an alliance with England, and M. Deschanel was acting the part of a true patriot when he bade his countrymen forget for a while the bite of the mad dog, and look upon politics with a cold eye.

The benefit of an alliance.

But there is another side to the argument. An alliance implies a benefit on either hand. France, no doubt, would find it very much to her advantage if she could obtain the support of the perfidious and vilified Albion. But Albion has still much to say in dispraise of a sudden reconciliation. If we could help France, France is powerless to help us, and until she restores unto herself a stable system of justice and a firm method of government, her alliance is worth little. At present her energy seems lost in intrigue—with Menelik, with Mahdism, with Dr Leyds. But intrigue is the antithesis of statesmanship, and it is not likely that an English statesman will ever again deem it prudent to hold out the hand of close fellowship to France. Nor need we regret the inevitable breach. A nation which envies the expansion of her neighbour, and yet has not the energy to occupy effectively the African territory which her diplomatists won for her a brief year ago, is not a valuable ally. And what need have we of allies, who behold "this Britannick Empire built to a glorious and enviable height, with all her daughter islands about her"? Would we dare to hint for a moment that we shall not be "stayed in this felicity"?

The abuse of the French we may bear with tranquillity. The abuse of our own countrymen is not so easily supported. But, after all, the modern cannibal is a harmless beast, who would devour his fellows not with his teeth but with his tongue. His worst trait is his anxiety to solace your dying hours (as he esteems them) with inaccurate information. He says, in effect: "Thank God, the country which is yours and mine has fallen upon ruin;" and then, to improve the occasion, straightway explains how he would have averted an impending disaster. So he has established an "association" which shall spread the truth about South Africa. He should, of course, begin with the instruction of his own committee: but here modesty steps in, and he shrinks from a task which even his sanguine temper finds insurmountable. Wherefore he distributes the vague opinions of his country's enemies among the sound patriots who know their worthlessness. Of one thing he is certain —England is ruined; nor has he yet discovered that the wish is father to the thought. He is only anxious to explain the welcome destruction. Now he would saddle Lord Rosebery's racing-stable with the responsibility; now he finds that our universities are at fault. Were he gifted with reason, he might reflect that something more than a racing-stable is necessary to kill the British empire, and that *post hoc* is not always *propter hoc*. But malice is not reason's best encouragement, and so our cannibal shows his teeth aimlessly, until the news of his country's triumph will plunge him in grief.

Our universities.

As for our universities, a very little thought should reassure the waverers. There is many an English institution which we are not prepared to defend. But Cambridge and Oxford are above and beyond the need of defence. Older universities there are, and wiser nurseries of scholarship. Paris may boast her greater freedom, Berlin her deeper learn-

ing. Yet we need not fear any competition. Cambridge and Oxford are the children of an old tradition, and they could not have been born elsewhere than in England. They display at once the vices and virtues of our temperament. They spring not from logic, but from the past. They are good because they *are*, not because they serve a narrow practical aim. It is thrown at them for a reproach that they fit their pupils for no profitable career. A young Englishman does not come down from his university a lawyer, or a soldier, or a doctor. But he comes down with a far better equipment than a mere diploma: he comes down able to master most situations into which he may be thrust. And it is for this reason that our Government has been for centuries in the hands of graduates from our universities.

When the question is thus put to our enemies, their reply is obvious, and obviously irrelevant. Time was, they say, when the universities of England did breed a race of strong men; but strength has gone from us long since, and they who descend every year from Cambridge and Oxford with the useless right of using a degree are poor pampered minions. That this is untrue is demonstrable: despite the attacks of women, democrats, headmasters, and other faddists, our universities have lost precious little of their ancient character. Their worst enemy has always been the architect, who is far more dangerous even than the reformer, and the architect's triumph is undisputed. Yet there is so much that he has been powerless to destroy; there is still so rare a mixture of athleticism and the middle ages in our time-stained colleges, that we can think even of the dastard builder with some equanimity. To enter what appears a monastery, and to detect a monk in boating flannels who is not only a capable scholar but a live man, is not elsewhere a common experience; and if our universities have made this experience possible, let us turn a deaf ear to the envious critics who dislike an unshared privi-

lege, and give our universities full credit for the work they have accomplished in the world.

But our universities accomplish another work within their own borders. After all, while it is their general duty to make men, it is their particular duty to make scholars. And let those who doubt their success consult Mr J. W. Clark's 'Old Friends at Cambridge.' The scholars whom he celebrates are, with one or two splendid exceptions, unknown to the larger world which lies far from the Cam. But for all that they are men who performed their allotted tasks with admirable skill and courage. We cannot all be generals or saviours of our country; on the other hand, it is not every man who can prove himself the distinguished Head of a House, and William Whewell may certainly claim without at least some of the glory which was his within the walls of Trinity College. For there is no doubt that Dr Whewell was, in the limits of his profession, a very great man. He was not a great scholar: at his death his copyrights were worthless, and we do not suppose that any person will ever again consult his treatises. His own account of his scientific position is perfectly just and true. "I did but systematise," said he, "portions of knowledge which the consent of opinions has brought into readiness for such a process." Not a lofty ambition, maybe, but useful, so long as it lasts, and the writer of a lucid synthesis need not feel shame for his work. However, we do not know Whewell from his writings. His 'History of the Inductive Sciences' was long since forgotten, and his 'Plurality of Worlds' would have followed its companion into oblivion had it not been for Sir F. Doyle's epigram—

Cambridge in the nineteenth century.

"Though you through the regions of space should have travelled,
And of nebular films the remotest unravelled,
You'll find, though you tread on the bounds of infinity,
That God's greatest work is the Master of Trinity."

But that is what William Whewell was — Master of Trinity, and nothing else. He was a don in temperament, in learning, in conduct. A very great don, to be sure, but still a don. His view of his own importance was exaggerated, as his estimate of the universe was contracted. Within his own boundaries, he was an imperious autocrat; and he attempted, by instinct rather than by design, to carry his autocracy into the world. It is not astonishing, therefore, that he made many enemies, of whom Thackeray was the bitterest; that stories should have been told to his discredit is the punishment which he shares with all those in authority. He would not permit an undergraduate to sit down in his presence, said one; he is always insolent and overbearing, said another. And Mr Clark, his most loyal apologist, confesses that he was often at fault. "There are two ways," says he, "of doing most things, and Whewell was unlucky in nearly always choosing the wrong one." No wonder, then, if he were unpopular, and if on one occasion he marched from his college to the Senate House with a prize-fighter on either side of him. But his fault was largely a fault of manner. He browbeat rather from habit than from conviction; and it may be true, though it sounds a monstrous paradox, that Whewell "was in reality an extremely humble-minded man, diffident of himself, and sure of his position only when he had the approval of his conscience for what he was doing." Yet whatever his character, he was a great Master, and as a great Master he will ever claim the glory which the careless world denies him.

Far more polished and more august was Dr Thompson —another Master of Trinity, who is still fresh in the memory of the present generation. In all things he differed from Whewell—save in autocracy. They were both born rulers, and it was not their fault if the province over which they ruled was a small one. But with autocracy the resemblance vanishes. Dr Thompson chilled

with an epigram, while Whewell crushed with a heavy bludgeon of contempt. Dr Thompson had the advantage also from a spectacular point of view. No portrait of Whewell can be compared to the alert, kindly, contemptuous figure of Dr Thompson as we remember him. The ivory head of his cane was of the same tone as his sallow face, to which his silver hair was as a crown, and in every feature there was a sense of learned, amiable superiority. Yet behind that curious mask was as quick a wit as ever flashed at folly. This Master was not rude, but ruthless, and his jests are still the treasured heritage of Cambridge.

But, besides Dr Thompson, Henry Bradshaw and Palmer (to name but these) also belong to the last decades of the century; and their achievements prove, even in the world beyond Cambridge, that there is no retrogression in our universities, that the critics who put the blame of our "certain ruin" upon these seats of learning should go back a few steps on the path of history. To compare the Cambridge of today to the Cambridge of Gunning's 'Reminiscences,' which were gathered under George III. and the Regency, is to acknowledge that in all essentials modern Cambridge is superior to its predecessor. In one point only do we admit a manifest inferiority. When all the Heads of Houses were blackguards, and all the fellows were drunkards, Cambridge gained in picturesqueness what it lost in repute. Gunning frankly acknowledges that the university in his day plumbed the very depths of disgrace, and there is scarcely a single man who figures in his entertaining volumes that would be endured in our more modest days. His whimsical stories recall Aubrey's 'Lives' in their mixture of truth and phantasy, and it is not from spite that Gunning assures us that in his time all the Seniors of Trinity were addicted to rather squalid vices. It is merely because he combines with a love of truth a sense

The Cambridge of Gunning.

of romance. We shall never again see within the walls of Cambridge so eccentric a gentleman as Samuel Peck, B.D., who gave the country-folk the benefit of his legal advice, and then proclaimed—"A lawyer would have put you to expense: Sam Peck never takes a fee, but he loves gratitude; and he will accept a few sausages, a joint of pork, a couple of fowls, a goose, or a turkey, or any article that your farm produces." But the Rev. Samuel Peck, despite his mean gallantries, was an angel of virtue compared to the Rev. James Backhouse, B.D., that man of intrigue whose denunciation by Porson not even Gunning is bold enough to quote. All this is changed, with glory to our university, yet not without a tinge of regret to ourselves. The dark ages of scholarship have passed away, and are succeeded (maybe) by a too general intelligence. The old times were more entertaining and less meritorious; they would, of course, have inflamed the ire of the jealous Radical and given some colour to the popular charges. For all that, they still attract us; and we pray that in some corner of Cambridge there lurks a Gunning who will preserve the eccentricities of the last decades. There remains (or did remain) at least some curious material different in its essence from Gunning's, yet not unworthy a skilful attention. All we ask is a seeing eye and a bold pen that will treat it without venom and without timidity. Then in twenty years we may have another book that shall earn an honourable place by the side of Henry Gunning's 'Reminiscences,' which remains after half a century a unique and matchless record.

APRIL.

The Queen's visit to London.

The Queen's visit to her people of London will be an imperishable memory for those who witnessed it. The wise thought and the words which express it alike suggest those patriarchal times when constitutions were not, and kings were in truth the fathers of their country. The Queen will visit her people of London! No comment can better the simple dignity of that pronouncement; and the sacrifice of the lady, who faced the biting wind of March, found its best reward in the joyous patriotism of her people. As her carriage emerged from the Park into Pall Mall, the roar of enthusiasm could be heard at a distance of a quarter-mile, until the wonderful old lady herself approached, and then a wave of emotion checked the utterance even of an applausive shout. To explain this emotion is difficult, to deny it were absurd: one can only say that the presence of the greatest monarch in the world makes an instant silence imperative. Shouts greeted her coming, they followed her when she passed, yet for the moment that she was there the crowd was silent. And it is the more remarkable, this mixture of loud enthusiasm and silent respect, because the sentiment from which it springs is rather national than personal. To the most of us the Queen is a splendid symbol of empire: we admire the dignity of her life, the tact of her speech, the triumph of her reign. But when we see her, sitting in her carriage, bowing to her people with a pleased affability, nothing save a sort of mysticism can explain our emotion. She

is a symbol of empire—that is the mystery; and of such an empire as another human being has never boasted.

No king that ever put the world beneath his conquering heel has enjoyed so great a triumph as our Queen. Neither Alexander nor Cæsar subdued by the sword so many lieges as she has attached by the more peaceful method of conciliation. She reigns over a wider territory than was ever controlled by human hand; and yet she has never been able to sigh with the Emathian conqueror that there are no more realms to conquer, since even in this year she will add two republics to her empire. Louis XIV. made the world of courtiers tremble, yet his *majesté effrayante* had not the sanction which invests the appearance of our Queen Victoria with a sort of mystery. Nor let it be supposed that her reign has been a reign of peace. Though she did not gain her empire by the sword, she has protected it by the sword, and she has declared more wars than ever were dreamed in the bellicose brain of Alexander or Cæsar. Moreover, she has known all the distinguished men of the last sixty years; from all whom she has known she has compelled respect; and now, after sixty years of empire, she is still minded to visit her people of London, that she may share and approve the universal patriotism. So it is that she appears to us as a symbol of empire, as a token of a well-spent, grandiose career.

A peaceful conqueror.

But she is something higher than a symbol: she is also a woman, whose keen sympathy with her country has not been rusted by the passing years. If England has shown an equal mind in a disastrous crisis, the Queen has set a glorious example. She has not fallen below the great occasion even in the style of her brief letters and speeches, which have all been touched by a simple intimacy as well as by an august dignity. Above all, she has displayed a matchless tact, the greatest gift of kings. By making St Patrick's Day a national *fête*,

she did honour to the courage of Ireland, and laid the foundation of a unanimity upon which her approaching visit to Ireland will raise a stately edifice. From the beginning of the war she made plain her anxiety, and yet kept an unwavering courage until our success made courage easy. So that if, when we saw her on her journey through London, she appealed to us as a symbol, reflection shows her a queen, with the right instinct of a woman, and the wisdom of a statesman.

The demeanour of the crowd.

The demeanour of the crowd was no less remarkable. It was at once purposed and spontaneous. All the world shouted, and all the world knew why it shouted. Now, it has often been said that England differs from France in that it has no mob, and never has this truth been more clearly demonstrated than in the last few weeks. But to prove the truth of this assertion, we must find a proper definition. A mob, then, may be defined as a collection of persons which does, says, and thinks collectively what it would never do, say, or think individually. It pursues the wildest chimæras. Its danger is manifest and deplorable. A thousand sane men may meet in the street, and compel a policy which each one of that thousand would regret separately. When the Russian admiral visited Paris some years since, the Parisians in their own homes preserved a serene demeanour: no sooner were they in the street than they wept, laughed, and shouted they knew not why. Sane elderly men spent hours in the gutter that they might see pass a handful of officers who meant nothing to them, and of whose names and qualities they were wholly ignorant.

There we witnessed the mob at its best: if it were not intelligent, it was not dangerous, since so vague an enthusiasm can never endanger the State. But turn that mob to fury, and a revolution is imminent, for a mob cannot reason, and does not stop to think. The

communards, who were hardly restrained from the sacking of the Louvre, had no rage against the pictorial art. Had you canvassed them one by one, you would have found that ninety-nine out of a hundred reverenced the splendid gallery of Paris. But when once the ninety-nine had formed themselves into a mob, they surrendered the right of private judgment; and it is this very surrender which renders the Government of France ever shifting and unstable. In London this fury of the mob is unknown. The enthusiasm which greeted the Queen came from the crowd, and was ratified by the individual. Moreover, to be ratified by the individual, enthusiasm must be inspired by a reality. It is no chimera, but a reasoning admiration, which persuaded the people of London to shout themselves hoarse in the street; and if you would know the difference between the mob of Paris and the crowd of London, set the Russian *fêtes* of six years since side by side with the Queen's visit to her people of London.

The fury of a mob.

When reticence is imposed upon our crowd, it understands perfectly the virtue of silence. Had the French army met with the inevitable checks which hampered our progress in South Africa, government would have succeeded government in idle succession. The collective voice of the mob would not have been stilled, and rowdy bands would have marched up and down the street to intimidate the rulers of France, and to demand a frequent change. So says the 'Figaro,' and firm in the conviction that after Colenso London was a rebel-pit, the first journal of France sent her most expert reporter to describe the scene of misery and desolation. He found not a line of "copy"—only a city resolute and unmoved. Then came the relief of Ladysmith, and London could no longer restrain herself. "At last," said an intelligent Frenchman to us,—"at last it is proved you have a mob." But we think the intelligent

Frenchman was wrong. Sober stockbrokers broke their hats, and blew penny whistles in the street, not because they had surrendered the right of private judgment, but because their feeling of relief chimed with the universal feeling of relief. Thousands knew that at last friends and relatives had escaped the clutch of fever or starvation, and the whole world went out that the expression of their joy might have a larger space. A wise enthusiasm will always be evoked by a British victory or by the flattering sympathy of a wise queen. But this legitimate enthusiasm does not belong to the mob, a curse which visits us but seldom, and which then destroys its own energy by the easy breakage of a few windows.

The Théâtre Français in ashes.

But in the hour of our triumph Paris has been overtaken by a disaster in which, despite the constant suspicion of anarchy and dynamite, the mob has played no part. The Théâtre Français is in ashes. The temple wherein the august tradition of Molière has been enshrined for a century is but a ruin. The loss falls not only upon France: Europe is the poorer by its most elegant theatre, and no one who has seen Molière played upon his proper stage can stifle a heartfelt and genuine regret. Here is no room for political rancour; the true art of drama is never Chauvinist, and not even the Nationalist press, which hastily lays the blame upon Dreyfusism, can lessen our grief for this universal disaster. Although the Comédie Française is no affair of stones and windows, although it has known other homes than the stately building which was late a glory of Paris, it never has known and never will know a home better suited to its purpose and ambition. There was nothing more beautiful in the beautiful city of Paris than the public *foyer*, dominated by Houdon's superb Voltaire. There for a hundred years has the wit of Ferney smiled from his marble throne upon a changing crowd of cosmopolitans;

and thence on a summer evening, when the light of the clear sky struggled against the glittering lamps, the spectator might look down on the *place* beneath, busy with thronged *cafés* and hustling pleasure-seekers; while to gaze from the pavement at the lighted windows was to snatch, as you passed, a sudden vision of luxury and joy.

Still more wonderful was the *foyer* of the actors, that treasure-house of pictures and of relics, upon whose walls hung but a month ago the antic portraits of Molière and his comrades, and where on the night of a *cérémonie* you might encounter the whole company dressed up, like children for a charade, in the robes of a doctor or a Turk. Everything was orderly, everything was dignified —no squalor, no *cabotinage* disturbed the atmosphere of polished pleasantry. And the stage—was it not perfect in order and arrangement? The stage of the best London theatre still gives you an impression of squalor and a stormed barn; but the subventioned theatre of France remained splendid despite its litter of furniture and scenery. Moreover, it was something more than a theatre—it was to boot a museum and a library; and it is the one gleam of satisfaction in a dreary misfortune that the priceless archives, the incomparable sculptures, and the curious pictures have all been saved. The walls of the new theatre will soon arise; the rare and costly treasures will be guarded more jealously than before,—all, indeed, will be restored save the poor actress who has miserably perished on the threshold of her life and talent.

Its incomparable tradition.

But that which no fire can destroy is the constitution of the Théâtre Français and its incomparable tradition of acting. Though not a stone of the building were saved, still the Decree of Moscow would remain in force, a monument to Napoleon's foresight as well as to his noble detachment of mind. That a soldier, on the morrow of

a military disaster, should distract his grief by devising rules for the management of a theatre is without precedent in the world's history; that these rules should survive half-a-dozen changes of dynasty is a still greater miracle. Yet more wonderful is the thread of tradition which links the theatre of Sardou with the theatre of Molière, and this tradition is far more subtle and more lasting than sites or stones. The torch of art has been handed on from generation to generation; the actor of yesterday is the professor of to-day, and the training which is always imperative ensures the persistence of an excellent and authentic style. What Delaunay practised twenty years ago he now preaches; and since he learnt from a predecessor the art which his pupils will presently inculcate, it is clear that there need be no break in the acting of France.

So much, then, is imperishable, and thus our regret for the lost theatre is sensibly mitigated. Nor do we need an elaborate argument to prove the advantage of an admirable system. The English actor begins his career and commonly ends it an amateur. He has so generous a faith in his own powers, that he believes he can act like a gentleman on the stage because he behaves like a gentleman off it. He forgets that to produce an illusion, tone, gesture, and bearing must be changed; and forgetting this, he forgets also the value of training. He saunters upon the boards without doubt and without fear, and the consequence is that the men of genius who beguile our leisure can rarely speak with a cultivated accent, and not infrequently walk like contortionists. The French actor, on the other hand, does not perform until he has been to school, until he has learned to manage both his voice and his limbs with decorum; and if he be at the Français he learns something more than this: he learns to act (so to say) with all the weight that tradition gives him. To see Coquelin's incomparable "Tartuffe," for instance, which

is the fine flower of the French School, is to forget the actor in the part. This is not the Coquelin of the Porte St-Martin, who as Cyrano proved that he could embroider the commonplace as well (or as ill) as Sir Henry Irving; this is the old Coquelin of the Théâtre Français, demonstrating that, despite many years of starring, he can still accommodate an amazing talent to a perfect method. And we know not to which we should ascribe the greater merit—to the talent or to the method. The talent is all the actor's own, the sonorous voice, the apt gesture, the inestimable restraint which enables him at the crisis of the play to achieve a great effect by the simplest means, the faculty of getting into the very skin of the character, the sudden change from insolence to humility, in which even his back and shoulders appear to be acting. But the method, like the scenic decoration, is as old as Molière. Without the sacred tradition, there might have been a Coquelin, but never Coquelin's "Tartuffe."

A simple stage.

So it is that, though Coquelin is at the Porte St-Martin, a visit to the Théâtre Français, which still endures, though its walls be crumbling, takes you back across the centuries. The setting is as simple and restrained as the performance. A backcloth with a table and a few chairs are all that was necessary in the seventeenth century; they are all that is necessary to-day, and they are all that you get at the Français, when the classics are given. The stage is not clogged with the vulgar furniture of archæologists; the play has no difficulty in emerging from its ornament; and you will never hear at the Français the foolish comment "How lifelike!" which bursts from the lips of the untravelled Londoner when he sees the Rialto in the "Merchant of Venice." And as there is a propriety in the scene, so there is a propriety in the acting. All are loyal to the *ensemble:* here is no competition to get into the limelight, no thirsty anxiety to deliver a

tag upon a lonely stage. Each is resolute to contribute his (or her) share to the interpretation of the play, and that vain jealousy which is the disgrace of the drama is not permitted to disturb the deliberate result. For at the Théâtre Français discipline and the sense of a high calling have reduced the peculiar vices of mummery to their lowest terms. *Cabotins* there are at the house of Molière; *cabotins* there will always be, wherever a curtain be drawn up on a stage. But at the Français no actor-manager can strut and mouth for his own glorification: first and last must obey the rules of the house; and let it not be forgotten that when, after one of his lapses, Coquelin returned to the great theatre, he took his place as the youngest of the *sociétaires*. Moreover, the company recognises the dignified position which it holds, as a branch of what we should call the Civil Service. It is controlled by a Minister, and thus is set high above the petty squabbles which too often cover a green-room with ridicule; it is superior to that greed of gold which confuses talent with a treasury-list. Above all, wherever it goes, it carries its pride and its convention with it; and the disastrous fire, which the world deplores, is but an episode, not an interruption, of history.

What wonder, then, that the Théâtre Français reverences the past, and still presents the masterpieces of Racine and Molière in such a guise as the poets themselves would understand? It is impossible to imagine Shakespeare assisting with composure at a performance of his plays given in London. He could not but shudder at the vision of an actor making his verse the excuse of ingenious and eccentric "business"; he could not but regret that he, the master, had become the servant of actor and stage-carpenter. But neither Molière nor Racine would feel out of place did they look down from the other world upon the Théâtre Français, where, after two centuries, they might recognise the ancient gestures and the familiar accent.

So loyal, indeed, are the comedians to the past, that they preserve the old customs and the old ceremonies. Molière is still crowned upon his birthday; and at certain seasons, when "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" or "Le Malade Imaginaire" is given, you may see the whole strength of the company masquerade in curious robes, and may hear such august actors as MM. Mounet-Sully and Worms joining with the youngest *pensionnaires* in songs of ribaldry. Then, should a *sociétaire* retire from the theatre, you may witness such a ceremony as might fitly close the career of a great public servant. In brief, the Théâtre Français never ceases to recall to the world a glorious past, of which it is still and will ever be mindful. Yet of late years there has been a decline—not serious indeed, since the institution is stronger than its servants. But it must be admitted that the old men were better, the old stage was better. When M. Worms retires, there will be none to take his place. Not one of his colleagues, it seems, will ever play "Le Misanthrope" with his amplitude and reticence. Nor will M. Mounet-Sully easily find a successor. Great as is his talent, he has always seemed to us out of place at the Théâtre Français; his style and temperament are essentially romantic; he delights in throwing ingenious sidelights upon a difficult part, and interesting though his "Hamlet" be, it is ill-assorted with the classic grace of the ancient theatre. He should have gone off to star it at the Porte St-Martin, while Coquelin should have stayed behind to uphold the honoured tradition. But M. Mounet-Sully's devotion has never wavered, and at his retirement, long (we hope) to be deferred, a note of personal distinction will be silenced.

Loyalty to the past.

While the company is not gathering strength, the scene has suffered from an evil example. If the classical repertory is as simply mounted as ever, the Français has of late years displayed an ambition to rival London in

the mounting of modern plays. Now, illusion on the stage may best be attained by a consistent avoidance of realism. When a solid scene is built up round the actors, the actors must of necessity lose their credibility. Where all is false, a breath of reality destroys a just impression; and the drama, which should present, not represent, is peculiarly sensitive to the encroachments of such hard facts as heavy furniture and inapposite archæology. But we have a convinced faith in the logic and refinement of the Théâtre Français. Other actors and actresses will take the places of those who after years of loyal service hang their harps upon the wall. The fashion of elaborate decoration will pass away with other foolish modes, and the first theatre of Europe will keep the place which it has held for centuries. Of course young France will dub it *vieux jeu* with contempt, because it does not care to be in the movement. But the *vieux jeu* is ever green, and will survive, as it has survived, a hundred short-lived schools.

MAY.

The attempt of Sipido.

The attack made in Brussels upon the Prince of Wales might have been a tragedy: it was a solemn farce, and the foolish Sipido's preposterous adventure is only memorable because it reminds us that Anarchy is still a genuine danger to the State. Happily the Anarchist is a fumbler, more inclined to suicide than to murder, and so long as he played with explosives it would have been sound to advocate a policy of "one Anarchist one Bomb." But the monstrous society, which preaches death, has of late discountenanced the indiscriminate use of infernal machines, and the murder of President Carnot six years since proved that the knife is more deadly than dynamite. Yet, while the implements change, the assassin remains at once wicked and futile. As he works underground, it is difficult to foresee his villainy, while it may be impolitic to flatter his love of advertisement by a premature prosecution. The best that Governments can do is to see that the Anarchist, when he is caught, has the briefest trial and the severest sentence that can be devised. For after blood, he most loves publicity, and since his attacks can only be met by knowledge, it is worth while to attempt an analysis of his character.

The Anarchist, then, is a ruffian of feeble brain and weak inclination, who is pursued by a spirit of restless discontent. Sorry for himself, he believes, by an easy transition, that he is sorry for his fellows; and it is this sham sympathy, rooted in selfishness, which gener-

ally wins for him the credit of amiability. When Caserio was charged with a useless murder a dozen witnesses readily swore to the kindliness of his heart, and we are not surprised that Sipido, too, is reputed a miracle of good nature. So the discontent, which he fondly construes into a general love of the human race, drives the Anarchist to attempt reform, and for him reform means death. So narrow is his brain that he can conceive no other remedy for a trifling ill than murder: he would wipe out a spot of dust with blood, and his one war-cry is Kill, kill, kill! His diseased intelligence, then, forbids him to understand the link which binds cause and effect. He recognises his poverty, and believes that a change of system will ameliorate it; but he can imagine no method of changing a system, which appears irksome, save the death of an innocent man. That is to say, he does not understand the rules of Society's game: he is like a man who would be taken for a gentleman, and yet cheats at cards. So he rushes into the street, armed with dynamite or dagger, and finds heroism in a lupine brutality.

The character of the Anarchist.

Hence it follows that he is of a sanguine disposition. He is of those who hope always that the wickedness of to-day will be overlooked by the mercy of the morrow, and in truth nothing need appear hopeless to the brain which detects in an unreasoned crime a cure for poverty. As he is, so is his aspect. His sanguine temper is reflected in the flat-gazing eye of spurious prophecy, from which his low forehead recedes. A lack of control is patent not only in his open mouth, but in the weak chin which falls away sudden from his lower lip. More often than not a feeble body and unkempt fluffy hair make further advertisement of the idle restlessness which his admirers mistake for activity. But it is part of the Anarchist's ironical character that he is never active,

His sanguine temper.

or at any rate he is never effectual. He is eloquent enough concerning physical force, and though from a too placid obedience or from a pitiful lack of control he now and again throws a bomb or drives home a poniard, his temperament belies his ambition. The really active man translates his wish into deed; while Anarchy is a kind of moral ataxia. The Anarchist's mind appears to desire something, but his muscles jerk in an opposite direction to his resolve; his hand is recalcitrant to his volition; and when he would pretend to serve mankind, he is impelled to make a dastardly assault upon a woman.

But, says his apologist, at any rate the Anarchist is a man of courage; at any rate he risks his skin for an idea. Nothing is farther from the truth: he is not brave, this irresolute apostle of slaughter; he is the victim, not of ideas, but of words. Impelled to his ineffectual act by a phrase, he deems no risk excessive, if only he be given a chance to work off a few tags before his judges. His quick restless mind omits one step in the argument. He sees the crowded court; he is blind to the gallows. He imagines himself for a moment the centre of attraction, he seems to hear the echo of his hollow voice, as he proclaims the foolish sentences which he has learned by rote. And his stupendous vanity blinds him to the last consequence, the early morning and the ghostly counsel, the chill walk from the prison to the guillotine, the oblique blade and the fateful basket. These horrors do not appal him, because his self-satisfaction carries him no farther than the speech which he fondly believes will impress the jury. If there were no vanity in the world there would be no Anarchists, since vanity is the essence of that stupidest of crimes, which is called political. None but a vain fool would attempt single-handed what he grandiloquently describes as the "regeneration of man"; none but a vain fool would choose for this

attempt the ridiculous method of inconsequent assassination; none but a vain fool would overlook all the consequences of his deed save the chance of an ill-delivered speech in a hostile courthouse. And in all the history of Anarchy you will not find one practitioner who did not unite in himself the three qualities of vanity, hope, and cowardice.

The Anarchist, moreover, is commonly half-educated. Rotten before he is ripe, he has extracted from cheap philosophy all that is mischievous. Reeking with murder, he will quote Herbert Spencer, as the devil quoted Scripture, to his purpose. Well do we remember the dying speech of Henry, the very type and exemplar of the modern Anarch. This miscreant, having thrown a bomb into a crowded *café*, and having already caused the death of several innocent men, opened his mouth to prove in the pride of eloquence how intimate an acquaintance he possessed with the works of our modern philosophers. Yet it was plain that he knew them only in selections, and that he understood not their drift. Assuredly he who finds in Darwin and Spencer the sanction of murder would have been more usefully employed in the breaking of stones than in the filching of proverbs whose meaning he cannot dimly understand. But the Anarchist is superficial even to the guillotine, and he believes that if an axiom sounds in his ear he has plumbed the depths of science.

Herbert Spencer and murder.

Such is the type to which the most of "political" murderers conform. Such was the foolish, amiable Vaillant, who thought that an infernal machine thrown into the Chamber of Deputies might call attention to himself and his fortunes. In this he succeeded, and if there were room for cynicism in the adventure, we might smile at the irony which chose the place and the method. At any rate, the Deputies experienced a new terror, even though the machine was wreathed in

flowers. Such, too, was the miserable Henry, who comes nearest to our ideal of shiftless, irresponsible half-knowledge. Such, too, was the poor Caserio, who was elevated by his compatriots into a hero of the Sunday-school. But all those who have called themselves Anarchists have not made good their claim to this title of disgrace. The famous Thirty, who stood in the dock at Paris to answer for the sin of Caserio, were a mixed mob of marauders, with scarce an Anarchist among them; and Orthez, the single one that won a heavy sentence, was merely a cracksman with a taste for politics. Ravachol, the miscreant who so bitterly intimidated the juries of Paris that his conviction seemed impossible, used Anarchy as a cloak for murder and rapine. He at least suffered from no moral ataxia: being a man of action, he knew precisely what blackguardism he wished to commit, and if we cannot applaud the jury's cowardice which condemned him for a common crime, he would have been thrice a murderer had the doctrine of the Social Revolt never been formulated.

Nor are these the only exceptions to a clearly defined type. There is another sort of Anarchist, who works stealthily not for a revolution but for the gratification of his own Sadic temper. Not many years ago there was a mysterious stranger, one Sternberg, who supported the Anarchs of France for the mere lust of slaughter and suffering. Wherever workmen were in revolt, there were tidings of this man of mystery. It was not his hand that threw the bomb, but it was his brain that devised the crime, his money that bought the materials. For a while he was the best known man in France, yet few eyes had ever beheld him, and few men knew his nationality. He is a Pole, said this one; he is a Russian, said that; and we may cheerfully leave it to the wiseacres of Eastern Europe to settle their claim. But he was indefatigable in his desire of blood. "Kill more, you brutes!" he is reputed to have said, when he thought

his creatures were not giving him value for his money. He was working at Antwerp, he was an inspiration at Lille, and then he vanished. Tried for murder, he was twice condemned, and at last a rumour came that he was in a Russian prison. Thereafter an enemy espied him at Geneva, and none can say whether he is dead or buried alive. And none need care, for at the last he grew careless, and destroyed the mystery which was his only safeguard. Of course it is difficult for the pitcher not to return to the well, but of this we may be sure, that if the ineffable Sternberg still lives, he indulges his lust of blood in other than Anarchist circles.

Anarchy a fashion.

But these casual ruffians merely put an accent upon the real Anarchist. They have no phrases wherewith to gloss over their infamous crimes; their hand does not move in obedience to another's will; and they never would have been confused with the miscreants we are considering had not fashion and folly once set towards Anarchy. Paris of course is the home of *blague*, but surely there was never a more comical folly than that which some six or seven years ago invaded the Parisians. The city was intimidated by the apostles of "physical force"; in every quarter *cafés* had been attacked, and the people were so nervous that the rumble of an omnibus suggested an explosion. And in the midst of it all, Anarchy became a fashion, or at least an affair of curiosity. The most advanced school of literature dabbled in explosives, and the throwing of a bomb was said to be a *beau geste*. One man of letters there was who suffered arrest for his love of novelty, and took his trial with the others on a capital charge. Indeed it is not too much to say that the adroitness with which he faced the examining magistrate saved not only his own but many heads. Another man of letters, who also had dabbled in "politics," met his deserts by being blown

into the air himself; yet so strong was the ruling passion that when, many days after, he regained consciousness, the first words which sprang to his lips were *Vive l'Anarchie!* If life were a comedy, and the spilt blood of kings and presidents of no account, we might afford to smile at these elaborate and dangerous jests. But life is not a comedy, and we cannot overlook the truth that the *intellectuels* of Paris, whose desire to be in the movement is notorious, were vaguely responsible for much useless loss of life and a brief reign of terror.

Nor can France escape with a half-humorous responsibility. It is France also that made Anarchy possible. For Anarchy is the legitimate child of the Revolution, which now appears to us in a true light as the Mother of Evil. If the lesson of murder had not been taught to the imbecile citizens of the Terror, we might never have heard of that assassination which appears to its votaries as the highest virtue. The Revolution it was that first discovered the grandeur of cowardice, that first saw in the severed head of a girl the symbol of freedom and patriotism. The country which still insists that the Revolution must be taken *en bloc* as a re-birth of the world, can hardly be surprised if her citizens and her pupils have learned the use of dynamite and the knife. Assassins there were, of course, before the black year, 1789, but they were no better than sporadic imbeciles, and neither Fenton nor Bellingham struck with the weight of a misguided movement behind them. No; the Anarchist is a brief century old, and already it is time that he should crawl away to death, and be no more known.

But if we blame the poor half-witted creature who strikes the blow, what shall we say of the cowardly miscreant who arms the trembling hand? One thing is certain in the last outrage—the real culprit will escape punishment. The journalists and politicians, who have for the last six months made Belgium a disgrace to

civilisation, avoid the charge of murder only by their furtive cunning. Sipido struck at the Prince of Wales because his weak brain could not understand the lies poured every day into the 'Petit Bleu' and other prints, because his unaccustomed ears could not estimate at its proper value the murderous jargon of Socialist orators. But the smug editor goes home and deplores in a paragraph the crime of which he himself is guilty, and the orator makes another attempt to split the roof of a tin tabernacle with his raucous voice. They at any rate do not suffer for the wickedness they provoke; yet it is very sure that, were it not for their devilish ingenuity, the world would not be disturbed again by "political" crime.

And what is the future of Anarchy? Blank for the Anarchs, hopeful for us. The international association, which once devised murder in secret, and put to death its disobedient members, has passed its zenith of brutality. The activity of the police, and the dying zeal of the agitators, have doubled its risk and halved its ingenuity. It will still hold its middle-class meetings, and discuss the works of Herbert Spencer; it may from time to time find fresh victims; but its influence is dying all the world over, and its forward policy will never be renewed.

Political Anarchy, then, expresses itself in lawlessness of thought and deed: in the world of letters the Anarchist tramples under foot both reverence and good taste. His favourite thesis is that the past is naught—that a new language and a new style are necessary for distinction. This confession, though he knows it not, is a confession of incompetence, since eccentricity easily attracts notice, and since only the great ones of the earth dare to touch the commonplace. But the literary Anarchist is not among the great ones of the earth, and so he enrols himself in a new school, and believes that he will come

The Anarchy of letters.

into repute if only he disregard the simple rules of grammar and good sense. When he studies the classics, says he, it is but to avoid their example; and he learns to write, so he boasts, that he may the more effectively outrage the acknowledged laws. For him the battle is won when he has pinned a label on his waistcoat. "The Symbol! The Symbol!" cried a fine specimen the other day, unconscious in his ecstasy that it is no better to rob Maeterlinck than to steal from Shakespeare. Of course he does not understand what the Symbol means, or he would know that it is essential to all literature, and not the peculiar heritage of a cenacule. However, to-day the literary Anarchist finds in "Symbolism" his highest explosive, as yesterday he attempted to break the windows of opinion with "Deliquescence," or the theory of coloured emotions. But one plagiarism is sincere as another, and those who adopt a canting title, abandoned ten years ago in Paris, are merely the law-breakers of literature.

These gentry, however, possess an unconscious humour, which adds a spice of entertainment to their works. There is another class of law-breakers, whose evil-doing is unredeemed even by an accident. Now, these other Anarchists defy the rules not only of letters but of life. They take upon themselves the burden of irresponsible biography. Heedless of an imperious, unwritten law, they make an attack upon the dead, and with the dynamite of a poisonous curiosity they explode graves and open coffins. Their offence is worse, because it cannot be punished at the Old Bailey. No law restrains the impious from playing havoc with the dead, and the impious, as if to aggravate their offence, are wont to choose victims to whom a public revelation was especially distasteful. The wish of Thackeray that no biography should confound his memory might have been respected without difficulty. Yet has Mr Melville made the novelist an excuse for

Irresponsible biography.

two volumes of ineptitude. Of course such work as a man deliberately gives to the world is the world's possession for all time, and there is no reason why it should escape posthumous criticism. Indeed, as the centuries roll on, even unauthorised biography may be justified; for with the extinction of friends and families indiscretion disappears, and eavesdropping is elevated into scholarship. Where ingenuity strives with oblivion, a worthy task of resurrection may be accomplished. To call Shakespeare or Villon to life again is not a pastime for the foolish hack; the archives must be compelled to surrender their secrets, and none but the seeing eye can discover that which is writ in parchment. Besides, there is a fine element of sport in wrestling a fall with Time, in compelling the old adversary to yield his treasures.

To write the life of a poet, still intimately remembered on the earth, lies within the power of any man who can hold a pen and quiet his conscience. Yet Edward FitzGerald should surely have imposed silence upon the world. More fiercely than Thackeray, more fiercely than any writer of his generation, he hated the glitter of public appreciation. He was never a man of letters in the odious sense. He wrote for himself what he chose to write, and he published it furtively, as though he scorned to take the public into his confidence. Many of his friends did not suspect the authorship of the 'Rubáiyát,' and while he withheld his name from his own title-pages, he never trafficked with the advertisers and interviewers of London. In his grave, then, he should before all men have been free from intrusion. Nobody has the right to force upon a dead man the foolish publicity which in his life he eloquently condemned. Yet not even Edward FitzGerald is safe, for here is Mr John Glyde come to tell us all those irrelevant facts which his victim was resolute to suppress. That he has told us little enough is assuredly not

his fault. He has raked wherever he could; and if his rake has merely gathered together a small heap of dead leaves, this scanty result is not due to lack of zeal, but to FitzGerald's determination that he would leave as little as possible for publicity's rake.

Mr Glyde's indiscretion will be forgotten in a month, and it is only interesting because it is a symptom of the ruling effrontery. There is no law to check the irresponsible biographer, and we fear that there is no chance of salutary legislation. The question of copyright is now said to engross the attention of Parliament, and it would be easy to add such a clause as would make the profession of the biographical pirate dangerous, if not impossible. But Parliament is not likely ever to do justice to the poor author, since the poor author cannot turn an election nor hamper a Government. And as politics is (and must be) a species of blackmail, nobody will ever be protected by our Ministers who cannot threaten those Ministers with ruin. Wherefore the Glydes of this earth will flourish exceedingly, unless the good feeling of critics and readers discourage their impertinence.

But by a kind of irony Edward FitzGerald has lately been flung into a still deeper pit of notoriety. Not only has he found an absurd biographer—he has become the victim of an absurd cult. The man who spent his whole life far from coteries, whose best companion was the captain of his lugger, whom not even warm-hearted friendship could drag to town, has been forced to give a name to a dining-club. This satirical insult cannot be matched in the history of letters, and if anybody ever turned in the grave, then must Edward FitzGerald move restlessly in Boulge Churchyard, when the Chianti of Rupert Street sparkles red in the wine-glass. There is, in fact, a club, called after FitzGerald's version of Omar Khayyám, which meets more often than it need either for its own glory or for the glory of Edward FitzGerald. Its

members, we believe, are respectable men of letters, and there seems no reason why they should not pursue collectively and in secret a worship which each affects of his individual will. But although the club was recently described as "a modest coterie, which never advertises," its dinners are always the signal for a public outburst of enthusiasm. We are told how these respectable men of letters sit with vine-leaves or some other vegetable encircling their scanty locks; we have a vision of them pouring the cheap wine of Italy over the roses of Shiraz; their weak little parodies of the Master's quatrains are passed round an appreciative press, until we are forced to believe that "the modest coterie which never advertises" believes the eye of posterity is upon it. It would all be very droll but for the careless use of FitzGerald's name. A dinner is as good an excuse for advertisement as anything, and logs are easily rolled across a dining-table. But why should Edward FitzGerald be thrust into this orgie of culture? He never belonged to a modest club, he never sat with vine-leaves round his head in the very presence of an industrious press, and the Omar Khayyám Club may not even plead the recklessness of hot youth for its unwarranted tampering with two honoured names.

"A modest coterie."

But there is another charge which may be laid at the door of our modest coterie—the charge of hypocrisy. Inspired by the sentiment of the 'Rubáiyát,' its worship cannot but be insincere. The honoured men of letters, who conspire to do honour to the famous translator, are surely not moved even by admiration to the bland Epicureanism which was the essence of the Persian's gospel. They are not so blind to the morrow as to withhold their little verses from the press; they have no "winter garment of repentance" to fling "in the fire of spring," as they fill the cup; they cannot say, with honest hand upon beating heart, that they were "never deep in any-

thing but wine." No; their worship is barren as well as indiscreet: they not only traduce the translator; they are false to the doctrine of the gay and wise original.

In brief, they, like the unauthorised biographer, have sought to make common what should have been rare, to make popular what should have remained exclusive and aloof; and, so doing, they have played their part in the tragedy of publicity which is daily enacted beneath our eyes. Time was when a better law prevailed—when a man was appreciated by what he did, not by what somebody else could find out about him; and it is another symptom of the prevailing Anarchy that a lettered club can so blindly overlook the claims of proportion as to believe that paltry garlands, publicly worn, are a fitting tribute to the memory of a dignified recluse.

JUNE.

THE dramatist and the novelist yield only to the actor in their conquest of the public regard. They are far more famous than politicians, and before the light which encircles their laurelled brows even the prize-fighter pales his ineffectual fires. But of all men the dramatist and the novelist most bitterly resent the lightest hint of disapproval, the gentlest nod of judgment. A silent indifference, of course, drives them to despair; they must always parade it in the public press, and always to a chorus of praise. Here, for instance, is Mr Pinero, who for a quarter of a century has been throwing the scent of the hay or of Ibsenism over the footlights, and who cannot patiently endure a word of censure. Any cap, indeed, seems good enough to fit him, and an irresponsible lawyer no sooner raises his voice in horror at what he deems the immorality of the stage than Mr Pinero lashes himself to a fury at the unwarrantable interference. It is all very well this cry of "hands off," if it be raised by an artist in letters, who works for himself alone. But the dramatist deliberately invites the opinion not only of the professed critics, but of the pit; and when once he has put his work upon the stage for which it is composed, he has deliberately challenged the popular verdict, and in honour he is compelled to accept it.

Mr Pinero and his critics.

Nor does Mr Pinero claim for an instant any esoteric mastership. By his own confession he writes for the crowd. "It is the modern drama," says he, "that gains most readily the suffrage of the general public." Whence

we may infer that "the suffrage of the general public" is the end of his ambition; and surely if he asks the general public to vote, he must let the general public vote as it will. Moreover, he takes so humble a view of his trade as to compare the modern drama "to a painting full of colour, of arrested movement, of story." And herein he does himself and his trade even less than justice. He might have remembered that each art has its limitations, and that, while painting and sculpture can present only a single aspect, a story, of changing growth, is the essence of drama. For us the important point is that he would put his craft no higher than a debased form of painting, and yet bid us hold it sacred from adverse criticism.

Again, while he hankers after the popular vote, he does not object to the censure of the professed and qualified critic. He could hardly thus object, when he has sent out free tickets, which are a plain request for an unvarnished judgment. To what, then, does he object? To the censure of Lord Halsbury and Sir Edward Clarke. Now, for purposes of criticism there can be but two classes. Every man must either be a professor or one of the crowd; and by Mr Pinero's admission the verdict of either is acceptable. None knows better than the author of "The Gay Lord Quex" that a hostile pit may kill a play in the cradle, for he too has seen his work utterly abolished by the voice of a refractory audience. And surely Lord Halsbury and Sir Edward Clarke have as much right to pronounce their judgment as the nameless Dicks, Toms, and Harrys, whom the dramatist flatters in the very moment of expressed contempt. But though the eminent lawyers never mentioned the name of Mr Pinero, Mr Pinero hastily takes their reproaches to himself, and loftily declares that he knows nothing in their antecedents which should induce him to regard them as authorities upon the stage. But their antecedents are at least as good as the antecedents of a common first-night audience,

The right of criticism.

and the dramatist, since he does not appeal merely to a jury of experts, is bound to accept the verdict of the crowd. The drama, in fact, as we know it to-day, lives on a momentary applause. The playwright cannot work in secret like the maker of books, whose words may live secure in the admiration of ten readers. He needs a stage for the display of his talents, and the stage needs an audience for its support, and the approval of the audience can only be purchased by such plays as satisfy its fleeting taste. How then shall the dramatist appeal to the judgment of the many, and cry aloud with indignation, when the verdict is against him?

Nor is the drama of to-day so rare and delicate a plant that it can live only in an atmosphere of wise appreciation. We shall not flatter Lord Halsbury and Sir Edward Clarke if we declare that they are quite competent to express an opinion upon such masterpieces as "Robespierre," "The Belle of New York," or even upon "The Gay Lord Quex" himself. Decadent these works are not, and Mr Pinero need not lay that amiable unction to his soul; rather they are bluntly primitive, the dry beginning, not the rotten-ripe end, of a common craft. But, after all, Mr Pinero's quarrel with a couple of lawyers, who probably never thought about him, is not important in itself. It is only important because it is an admirable illustration of the prevailing cant. Those who appeal to the world for its praise have no right to shrink from the world's blame. Only one attitude is honourable and seemly—an attitude of indifference. If condemnation be always malicious or ignorant (as for the sake of argument we may allow), then applause is either over amiable or unduly interested, and the one kind of criticism is worth precisely as much as the other. It is quite easy to keep out of the rough and tumble; but he who once descends into the pit must be neither surprised nor angered if an adversary wring him by the ear.

However, thus it is that our talented authors perplex

their lives and dissipate their energies. They surround themselves with press-notices, and at a hint of antipathy declare that the critic, professed or voluntary, is incompetent. Yet it is quite easy to avoid the slightest annoyance. For the dramatist who fears to look over the footlights, there is always the back drawing-room, and the frenzied applause of the family circle. For the writer of books there is always a limited issue "for private circulation," which makes a public censure impossible. Mr Bernard Shaw, more happily inspired than Mr Pinero, once declared that he was quite indifferent to the cool reception of a certain play. He wrote it, says he, with admirable logic, to be performed at home; the actors persisted in producing it abroad, despite his warning; and no judgment that the people or the critics could pronounce against it affected him either to joy or sorrow.

However, though criticism is of so little value, serious people will go on collecting press-notices until the end of time. And, on the other hand, those who have not the facility of print will express their views as loudly as though the 'Times' itself were at their command.

The Royal Academy.

Now especially is the voice of the critic as familiar as the note of the cuckoo, for the Royal Academy is open, and all the provinces are hasting to London, that they may discover the pictures of the year. In Mr Pinero's words, "the crowd is gathering round the painted story," and the story that is painted this year is the same story that has been painted year after year for half a century. The Academy has long been nothing but a raree-show, and it has no closer union with art than has the society press with literature. On the one side are foolish canvases that will be forgotten or painted over in a few months; on the other are monstrously indiscreet paragraphs, whose memory is obscured by next week's scandal. To say that this Academy is worse or better than the last would be to misunderstand its import. Two pictures do not

make an exhibition, and Mr Sargent cannot outblare the trumpet-blast of Herr von Herkomer. On every wall are the painted anecdotes with which we are familiar. Perhaps the military sentiment is more lavishly illustrated than usual, but not even the red-coats make a distinct impression; and for the rest the Academy is given over to waxen classicism, to the glorification of imbecile old age and more imbecile babyhood. The enterprising journal which invites its readers to record their votes for "the best baby" in the Academy sums up the character of the exhibition with a neater eloquence than it wots of.

The Academy, in fact, merely emphasises a truth which was obvious from the first, that exhibitions are ridiculous. To crowd two thousand works into one room is to build a Babel of Art. They all shriek at once, and each in a different tongue. The stoutest gold frame cannot separate one canvas from another; and that masterpiece has the best chance of survival whose crude and blatant colour outclamours its neighbours. What should we say of a hundred novelists declaiming their works under one roof? Yet should we not have as good a chance of disengaging their style and import as we have of distinguishing one thousand pictures huddled together on adjacent walls? Of course pictures are not painted that they may be hidden away in secret—that is obvious; but assuredly they are not painted that they may all be thrust upon our vision at once. The old masters did not fight for supremacy at a cheap fair; they painted their pictures at their leisure, and for their own sakes, and showed them to their friends or patrons under the most amiable circumstances. But the modern world which regards all pursuits as so many branches of commerce has discovered an easier method of publicity, and each Academy kills a thousand birds (so to say) with one stone.

Who it was that invented the monstrous practice of

exhibitions we are not sure; but the discredit, we fear, must rest with France. Louis XV. was on the throne when the first Salon was opened, and though at the outset the enterprise was not too successful, the pen of Diderot gave it a celebrity, and the Salon is still among the sadder institutions of Paris. From thence the habit travelled to London, until at last an Academy headache has become a definite complaint, and the undiscerning country-folk makes an annual incursion into London. Thus far had we written when the raucous voice of the newsvendor was heard without yelling the welcome news of Mafeking's relief: "The Relief of Mafeking! The Relief of Mafeking! Extry Speshul!" And then the roar of happiness, the shouts of joyous citizens increase in volume, until one thought absorbs all others. How should we "muse" of the Academy when we feel the pride of so gallant a feat? We had intended to point out the vulgar effect of a clumsy competition upon the fine arts; we had intended to declaim against the sin of false appreciation and the hopelessness of wasted endeavour. But what does it matter—the stupidity of this and all Academies, when Mafeking is relieved, and the most valiant outpost of our empire is saved from capture by the resource and intrepidity of a splendid soldier and a brave garrison?

The Relief of Mafeking.

So out into the street we rush to witness the triumphant joy of our city, and whatever be said of its expression, surely the joy is universal and spontaneous. Suddenly the whole of London becomes an orgie of union-jacks. Bunting of red, white, and blue seems to float from every window, to veil every doorway. Lamps are lit, flags are waved, and elderly men caper in sober intoxication, as though once again they were light-headed, nimble-footed schoolboys. They have borne the suspense in stolid silence; the stranger, no doubt, believed their quietude the result of indifference; he could not have

believed in their indifference had he witnessed the demeanour of London for forty-eight hours after the glad news was brought. And then through the long day processions wound in and out the streets; mobs massed themselves wherever there was an excuse to ask for a speech; the Mansion House was blocked with a crowd of playful ruffians, who thought that any tall hat was fair game for the joyous spirit of destruction. Nor did any one resent the outrage. Was it not carnival-time, and at carnival-time is not every licence permissible?

The enthusiasm perhaps was overdone; but if it were, surely the excess leaned to the side of generosity. The elderly gentlemen who smiled upon the roof of four-wheelers, waving paper flags and blowing cardboard trumpets, demand no excuse, but only admiration, of us. The ruffians who made a shuttlecock of irreproachable tall hats were harder to bear, but even their brutality may be excused on such a day, and it will be long ere the city is again turned into a wild pandemonium. And the event itself—what shall be said of that? Mafeking is saved, and one other splendid siege shines on the golden page of our history. Malice and ignorance have done their best to discredit the campaign which is now coming to its end. The facile, garrulous man, with no knowledge in his head, and little in his heart save hatred of England, never tires of pointing out that, despite our superior numbers, we have suffered disasters at the hands of the Boers. If the garrulous one would reflect that a force, fighting many thousand miles from its base in the midst of a hostile country, has work for an army in the guarding of communications and in the occupying of the country, he would not have inspired his poor victims with so false a confidence. But both ignorance and envy are powerless to discredit the achievement of Baden-Powell. There he was, isolated and ill-supplied, surrounded by enemies who were but a meagre hundred

A splendid siege.

and fifty miles from their capital, whence they could pour in what supplies and ammunition they needed. Outnumbered, outranged, yet never outfought, the British have held an open unfortified town against an enemy eager for success; they have furnished their own armament; they have defied hunger; and they have displayed precisely that quality of brilliant determination which we like to believe is our exclusive glory, and which certainly is the rarest expression of physical courage. What wonder, then, that London went crazy for a while, and covered its face with flags of triumph!

R. A. M. Stevenson.

So in the excitement of Mafeking we forget the Academy and all its sins. Yet we must recall it again, not because we would resume its indictment, but because this year's exhibition suggests to us an irreparable loss. To the lasting unhappiness of all his friends, R. A. M. Stevenson, who was wont to use the Academy as the unworthy whetstone of his intelligence, is dead; and no man of his generation calls more loudly for what poor tribute sorrow can pay. For Mr Stevenson has not built an enduring monument. He lived his life for himself, and he never gave to ambition the hours which he thought were destined to his own pleasure and the pleasure of his friends. He painted and he wrote, but neither in his pictures nor in his books did he reveal the genius that was his. His eager brain was so busy with theories, that he could never abandon himself completely to the excitement of colour and form. As for writing, he deemed it always an ungrateful trade, which he had learned late, and pursued of necessity. Yet, had he realised it, words were always his true medium, thought was his true material. There was, half-untrained within him, a splendid gift of expression, and none that knew him needs to be told how nimble a talent of invention he possessed. But he, to whom names and professions always meant much, decreed that he was not a "writer,"

and with infinite prodigality he spent his genius in talk and in the inspiration of others.

So it is that we remember him not by his writings, though they were admirable, but by his far rarer presence. The smiling eye, the alert mind, the quick, insistent, sympathetic voice, will be an enduring memory while life lasts us. He was a true fantastic, for whom all things, even himself, were appearances rather than realities, and appearances which changed and shifted as he willed. He was always dressing-up, as children say, and more than this, he was always dressing-up others. There was no one of his friends that had not for him a special character, which may or may not have resembled life, but which certainly influenced Stevenson's appreciation. One friend, for instance, personified for him the life of a rather squalid Bohemia. A, he would say, devotes his days to the comfort of the miserable and unfortunate. Another friend, with equal fantasy, he convicted of a too fine sensibility. B, he complained, was something of a snob in his pleasures. And for himself, his character changed with his hat or his coat. There are certain occupations, he would insist, which demand a particular costume, and his fancy was perplexed to discover how brilliantly a man of intellect should brush his tall hat, if Piccadilly or Bond Street were his goal. Now, an over-sleekness of the nap might suggest a banker or a stockbroker, and so monstrous a confusion was nothing less than libel. On the other hand, a man of intellect must be above the reproach of squalor, and the proper mean demanded both care and ingenuity. That Stevenson always discovered the mean is certain, and on the road to discovery he exercised his lightest wit, his most delicate fancy. So he spent his life in masquerade, a master of intellectual quick-change; and so happily did he infect his intimates, that they, too, lost themselves in the world of his imagination.

His poses, of course, were many and various; but

never for a moment was he a *poseur*. Whatever character he assumed was absolutely sincere, and he dressed the part without a touch of mummery. One of his fondest superstitions was that he belonged to a low race of men—that he was, as a friend dubbed him, "an Iberian, a shy-trafficker." Thus he would point to the shape of his head as a final proof of his origin; thus he would assert that the tribe, of which he came, was only fit to play the harp and to multiply, and he would involve in his own smiling condemnation half the company. It is not strange, therefore, that he found the common pursuits of middle-class life wholly distasteful, that he feared all those who belonged to the more prosperous professions. His imagination persuaded him that policemen, bankers, and editors were the sworn foes of the human (or humane) race. We believe that he never entered a bank without a feeling of discomfort, and we know that an editor was in his regard a monster with the evil eye. And though the phases of character through which he passed were presently forgotten, there was not one which did not leave its trace upon him. Once upon a time he was an undergraduate at Cambridge, and if you would have understood him, you were forced to remember that he kept one corner of his heart undergraduate still. In certain moods he remained the athletic, mischievous, sporting Cambridge man, who would tell you with a justified glee that he took his degree in the Botany Special, that he spent most of his time in Jackson's gymnasium, and that he was in his day a famous waterman. And every syllable was true. Athleticism was in his blood; he could not bear to think that he was losing his strength; his pride was still in the pole-jumping, of which he once was champion; the undergraduate who had explored the Cam and the Ouse and all their tributaries declared that he was as accomplished as ever in the paddling of a canoe; and it is not unlikely that feats of swimming hastened his end.

To the undergraduate succeeded the student of art, and it was with enthusiasm that he went to France, where, in his own phrase, he would "wield the pencil of Vandyke." And the art-student that was in him survived with the undergraduate. Many fanciful years he wandered in the forest of Fontainebleau, in some of whose villages he is still a superstition, which easily eclipses the memory of his more famous cousin. And this was, no doubt, the happiest, most fruitful period of his career. A return to France was for him a return to youth, to that far-off day when he helped to launch the celebrated house-boat—The Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne—at the Quai des Grands Augustins. Maybe the studios gave him more theory than practice; but his brain was essentially analytic, and he brought back from France theories on the conduct of life, as well as upon all the arts. For he was always a profound philosopher: he laughed at most things, and understood them all. His hard intelligence pierced every obscurity, and no man ever looked at life in a juster relation. Metaphysics had taken the place which theology sometimes fills in the Scot's brain, and he always intended to return to their study, which, said he, was the proper pursuit of a leisured gentleman. But, above all, he was an artist in talk; it was to talk that he gave the best of his life, and those who knew him have suffered a supreme loss. Never did he spare himself or his fancy. He spoke of all things with incomparable courage and invention. Now he would dazzle you with the fireworks of paradox, now he would speak with the daring of Rabelais and a mercurial gaiety which was all his own. Or he would sketch you odes in the manner of Wordsworth, or he would build you up a romance about a phrase, an aspect, or a casual visitor.

Undergraduate and student of art.

Robert Louis Stevenson, in his essay on "Talk and Talkers," has dubbed him "Spring-heeled Jack," and

the name does not seem perfectly appropriate. Quick, vivacious, alert he always was; but though he might change his method of attack or defence, he never changed his ground. Behind his swift thought and delightful levity there was a solid wall of principle—principle in art, principle in thought, principle in life. Iberian though he called himself, he was the sternest classic of his time. A reactionary, who had passed through the school of anarchy, he could not endure any violation of moral or artistic law. Milton and Wordsworth were still in his eyes exemplars to be cherished. Possibly he would have put the choruses in "Samson" by the side of Virgil, and it is not surprising that he worshipped Handel in music, and delighted in the solemn, grandiose motives of Poussin. Whatever view he held he would urge with a fiery eloquence. For despite his fear of banks and other solemnities, he was always gifted with intellectual courage. If opinions were discussed, the strange timidity with which life sometimes worried him instantly disappeared, and he would have his way against the world. To say that he was magnanimous and upright is to pay a compliment that no gentleman needs to hear. Yet we should do him less than justice if we did not record one effect of his influence. Those who knew him valued his approval above all things. Would Stevenson have done that? they would ask in the face of an artistic enterprise. Would Stevenson have thought that? they demanded before a new opinion. And we doubt whether a higher tribute than this can be paid to any man.

"Spring-heeled Jack."

And he is dead, this miracle of fancy and eloquence—dead, and no more, no less than a memory. Truly they write their name in water whose wisdom is prodigally poured forth in talk. Yet Stevenson esteemed life more highly than fame, and no man of our time has had a larger share of the good things which the world may give us—laughter, joyousness, art, affection. Above all,

as he lived his own life, so he will go on living in the impulse and energy which he imparted to others. And we rejoice to remember him as a man with no sharp edges, whose noblest traits, whose austerest principle, still had a margin to embroider with the flowers of fancy.

JULY.

A YOUNG poet, burning with enthusiasm and new ideas, once complained that he had not yet found a means of expression. "Je cherche une formule," said he, and if only his search had not been vain, he might have given a fresh shape to an ancient truth. Now, as we looked for the first time upon the French Exhibition, we too confessed that we lacked a formula, which might help us to describe so vast an assemblage of facts. There, within a single enclosure, which seems to cover half a town, are gathered together the spoils of the whole world. A Boer farm jostles the temple of a Cambodian god, an English manor-house frowns coldly down upon an imitation of Milan Cathedral; yet out of these diverse elements there emerges a sort of harmony, and although the parts quarrel bitterly enough in the broad light of day, it is still possible to view them as parts of a single whole—to find, in brief, such a formula as may express the biggest fair the world has ever seen.

The Paris Exhibition.

The formula, then, which expresses the effect is taste, —taste, above all, of arrangement. The materials, diverse and even clumsy as they seem in detail, are so cunningly set as to give an impression of a reasoned and absolute design, which is the fruit of France's logical taste and exquisite fancy. To enclose such a space as is measured from the Trocadero to the Champ de Mars, or from the Champs Elysées to the Invalides, is at first sight a merely grandiose enterprise. But the French genius has evolved from this grandiose enterprise a delicate beauty,

which delights even more than it amazes. The river is, appropriately, the centre of the fair; and the new bridge, dedicated to Alexander III., is a noble pathway, leading from the triumphs of French art to the Street of all the Nations. So simple and just is the design that it would have escaped any but a French brain, and while other countries must assume the blame attaching to their bizarre and fanciful imaginations, the credit of perfect order belongs to France alone.

Enter by the gate of the Champs Elysées, and you will see with how keen a sense of the picturesque the endless buildings have been placed. The vista is closed by the Palais des Invalides, a piece of old France reverently included in the new design. Against the white wings which enclose it, its aspect, perhaps, is dingier than it should be; but there it is to remind the world that the France of the Monarchy is still the France that we know to-day, and to suggest in some vague fashion that ancient and modern are not irreconcilable. Moreover, though the fatal ugliness of the Trocadero can know no palliation, though the buildings which surround it are awkward enough to be parts of an iron foundry, it needs only nightfall to convert the scene into a fantasy of the 'Arabian Nights.' There in the distance is the Château d'Eau, brilliant with its many-twinkling fountains, and over all strides the Eiffel Tower, its heavy iron turned to lace in the gloom, and its outline touched as it were by a phosphorescent hand.

But the two palaces, great and small, need not fear the light of day. None but French architects could have built them, and it is to the severe respect for tradition that they owe their beauty. Designed for the proper display of masterpieces, they are perfectly adapted to this purpose, and they will remain to do honour to Paris long after the Exhibition closes its doors. The Little Palace, especially, is a marvel of elegance, and, indeed, it should be, for it holds within the elegant treasures of

France. No more beautiful collection has ever been made, and within these spacious rooms, splendid with tapestry and stately with armoured figures, may be studied the handicrafts of France. Her furniture, her jewels, all the ornaments of her cathedrals, are there gathered and displayed, and it is evident that from Merovingian times to the Empire France was the home of magnificence and dainty design. There on the wall hang the rich tapestries of Angers; there is a gold cup, studded with jewels, which carries you back to the eighth century—barbarous perhaps, yet noble in its savagery. And so the Gothic age ascends to the Renaissance, and presently Louis XIV. yields to the simplicity of his successors, until the Directory gives way to the heavy grandeur of the Empire. But so far each style has its own propriety, its own splendeur.

Vulgarity the privilege of to-day.

As we descend to our own time there is another tale to tell, and we are forced to ask, Is vulgarity the privilege of the moderns? Or is it the universal habit of mankind to shudder at the contemporary taste? Will the centuries that are yet to come admire the cheap furniture and common inventions of to-day? We cannot think it, and the Exhibition is (from one point of view) of dismal augury. Of course, all ages have listened to the groans of conservatives, and have been half persuaded to believe that they marked the final decadence. The old knights who had served under Louis XIII. shuddered, as we know, at the new-fangled magnificence which distinguished the Court of the Grand Monarch. Doubtless, too, the style of Louis XVI.'s time seemed austere to those who remembered the twisted elaboration of an earlier taste. And how should the stately mahogany and the strange emblems of the Empire appeal to the stern partisans of the *Ancien Régime?* These changes of style corresponded to a change of feeling, and were each and all inspired by sincerity. They were also marked by a proper growth

and a logical development. In the modern style there is no growth, there is no character. Enter what pavilion you will—be it Mexico or Italy, Austria or Belgium—and you will encounter the same enormity. You cannot call the prevailing style French, nor even European; to name it after Felix Faure or Loubet would be an affront to those respectable Presidents. The style is of no place, of no time—it is merely modern. Nor is its ugliness its sole fault, though that should be sufficient to condemn it. Its lack of sincerity is a more heinous sin, because that sin not only ruins the present but makes the future appear hopeless. The prevailing fashion of ornament, in fact, belongs to nobody and corresponds to nothing. The man (or the people) who adopts it did not find it out; nor was it chosen from the ragbag of the past, because it satisfied a taste or chimed with an idea. Though it comes from the past, it is none the less an outrage upon tradition, because, old as it is, it jolts back to a purely arbitrary point of view. In the Little Palace no vulgarity distresses our eye. But we cannot believe that oceans of years will purge the stain of an indelible vulgarity from the cosmopolitan art of the shops.

A taste of arrangement.

The French taste of arrangement, then, is pure as of yore. The architects of France have not forgotten the value of space, the capital importance of balance and variety. So far as the ground-plan is concerned, nothing has been left to chance. The walks and gardens are designed with an exquisite tact. The very palings which encircle the Exhibition are proof enough of thought and intelligence. And so long as the buildings are a faithful echo, they commend our admiration. Their fairy whiteness, too, is the best background for such ornament as marble and tapestry afford. But when once a modern fantasy is let loose, disaster is immediate. The great gate in the Place de la Concorde, upon which so much praise is lavished, is a frank and blatant horror. An experiment

in the use of iron, it might have been both curious and interesting, but no material — not even the butter of the famous American statue — can excuse a palpable eyesore, and the flattened dome and the meaningless circles of this monstrous gate have no excuse save youth. Nor is the modern lady of Paris, who seems to step down from its top with opera-cloak on shoulder, one whit better than the parti-coloured gate. Yet it was a right idea, and perhaps it only failed because the sculptor, with no model before him, was forced to rely upon a treacherous fancy.

As with handicrafts and architecture, so with the pictures. The canvases of the last ten years, accomplished as some of them are, still look as crude and brutal as they did in their respective Salons. The canvases of the last hundred years—for it is into "decennal" and "centennal" that the galleries of French painting are divided—have already the complexion of old masters. Manet, once irreconcilable, is to-day enveloped in an atmosphere of distinction. The public of 1863 laughed at his "Déjeuner sur l'herbe"; the public of to-day, which is possibly less intelligent, smiles in approbation. What is it that is so easily accomplished by time? Maybe the heresy of to-day becomes the gospel of to-morrow; maybe the creed which half-a-dozen intrepid spirits dare to formulate is accepted after a first struggle. But at any rate it is consoling to reflect that the great man is ahead of his age, and that he can comfortably wait for the laggards to catch him up.

The unity of nations.

So it is that France has done her utmost to introduce in a spirit of unity all the nations of the earth, and she has done it with an exquisite skill and tact which belong to her alone. Yet, without being churlish, one may remember that the President and his Ministers pitched the key of enthusiasm a little too high. The Exhibition, we were told, was to revive our dying civilisation, to relight

the torch of art, and to give peace to all men. Of course it will do none of these things, which, indeed, are beyond the reach of human enterprise. But its achievement, if less humble, is none the less praiseworthy. It has given an example to the architects of the world; it has displayed its ancient treasures, which should be at once a model and an inspiration; it has marked the point of inefficiency to which modern handicrafts have attained; and it has proved that human ingenuity, which once was busied in the making of a chair, the modelling of a clock, or the enamelling of a snuff-box, is now exhausted in vast machines and in the manufacture of warlike implements. Schneider's great gun seems to threaten the Exhibition, and it is perhaps in the corner devoted to the army that we should seek an explanation of the prevailing vulgarity. So long as cannons engross the ingenuity of mankind, we must be content with a commercial art and with houses of hideous mien. The warfare of to-day is no aristocratic pastime; long ago it was lifted from the realm of sport into the realm of science; and so keen is the rivalry of destruction that guns and explosives are enough to engross the energy of a whole people. When the lull comes, if ever it come, then maybe the arts of peace will revive; but in the meantime the Paris Exhibition has taught us that the triumph of the modern world is mechanical. We can threaten our enemies more efficiently; we can kill space and time with greater ease; an automobile can speed us from one end of a country to another more rapidly than the old stage-coach. For these privileges we must pay the penalty, and, if our own generation produce little that is beautiful, we may solace ourselves with the creations of the past.

But while her President spoke with quaking voice concerning the mission of peace, the politicians of France still look upon the Exhibition as an opportunity for violent discussion and bitter acrimony. The Govern-

ment declares that the present and future of its country depends upon the success of a commercial enterprise; the Nationalists reproach the other side with subordinating the honour of France to a fancy fair, and confess that nothing would please them better than the hopeless failure of the Exhibition. From one point of view the Nationalists are right. It is inconvenient, and even dangerous, for a people to put all its eggs in one basket. Yet no sooner was the Exhibition resolved upon than France was pledged to the project, and for twelve years France has been loyal to the trust. Whatever has happened in the meanwhile has been sternly considered with an eye fixed upon the gate-money which during the summer of 1900 should swell the coffers of France. The spirit of restlessness which keeps our neighbours always in love with war or revolution has been partially checked, and, as we have said, the Nationalists may complain with a certain justice that of late years political agitation has enjoyed but half a chance. Who knows that but for the Exhibition the stain of Fashoda would not have been wiped out? Who dare assert that but for the same Exhibition M. Déroulède would not be installed at the Elysée? So they grumble, do the Nationalists, and pray for ruin, disorder, and collapse, knowing well that the failure of the Exhibition would aid the schemes of General Mercier as well as a European war.

The Exhibition—and after.

But, curiously enough, excitement is as necessary to France as wealth itself, and the wiseacres go about the streets wagging their heads, and asking with an air of profound mystery what will happen in the autumn. When the Exhibition has closed its doors—what then? With an inborn hankering after sensation, they think that they will never return contentedly to the quiet routine of former years, and they grimly prophesy war with England. That war, we believe, will never take place;

but it is quite possible that some such mischievous politicians as General Mercier will do their best to contrive a sensation. There will doubtless be packed within the walls of Paris many thousands of workmen whose job is finished, and who will be ready for a desperate enterprise. Moreover, it is evident that General Mercier is still dreaming of a dictatorship, since only the other day he declared that force is not yet necessary, implying thereby that when the proper moment arrives, force will be there to further his designs. But his designs are more likely to persuade him to assault the palace of his own President than to march upon London. The Channel is a desperate obstacle, and we shall never see Major Marchand climb the difficult ascent of Ludgate Hill. On the other hand, an army might easily overcome the guard of the Elysée, and once M. Loubet was ousted from his throne, a genuine measure of Republican freedom might be thrust upon an unwilling people by MM. Rochefort and Drumont. It might be an unpleasant prospect, had not the irreconcilables cried "Wolf!" once too often.

Meanwhile Paris enjoys herself, and those who are old enough to remember the glorious days of the Second Empire ask themselves why the gravity of the third Republic should not be eclipsed. Above all, the Parisians are indulging their legitimate passion for kings. Like all democrats, they contemplate a crowned head with frank enthusiasm. The heads which have worn the crown of France have lain uneasy for a century. Louis XVI. lost his on the scaffold; Louis XVIII. ran to and fro so often that he was half a stranger to his throne; while Charles X. and Louis Philippe both died in miserable exile. But, as has been truly said, "Gallus Gallo Lupus," and the French, who have detested their own kings, adore the kings of others. Not only have they purchased a villa for the reception of monarchs, but they are prepared to pay the sincerest

homage to any that will come. So far only one has accepted their hospitality, and the King of Sweden and Norway is not likely to forget his visit. Nor is this enthusiasm confined to Paris. Contrexeville is bowing the knee to the Shah of Persia, for the dust of whose chariots the citizens watched the horizon for many a day. The reporters chronicle his movements with a naïveté that is charming. If he walks, they are surprised that his imperial frame should be supported upon two legs; if he speaks, they are surprised that his voice sounds not unlike the voice of a man. And what they will say of the King of Portugal, of the Khedive, and, lastly, of the Emperor of all the Russias, we dare not foretell. Should these monarchs arrive, we hope a few words of adulation will be left in the sack.

The Republic's love of kings.

In this worship of lions, in this adulation of monarchs not their own, there is, of course, an element of pathos. But the sentiment cannot be dismissed as the mere confusion of the unknown with the magnificent. No doubt the sturdy republican does regret that his constitution provides him with an unemotional figurehead. Yet he might easily translate his regret into disdain, and that the average Frenchman never does. Deep down in the heart of France is the sentiment and the pride of hospitality. No country in the world is so profoundly, so justly, satisfied with its power of entertainment. Even without the Exhibition, there is more in Paris to tempt the traveller than in any other city of the world; and no vanity can persuade Englishman or German not to delight in the churches, the pictures, the gardens, and the theatres of Paris. Moreover, when Madame Metternich described the French capital as the *cabaret* of Europe, she hid a pretty compliment in a word of contempt. There is no disgrace in well-cooked food, and the Parisian restaurants are not a

superstition but an admirable reality. Paris, then, knows her virtues better than we do—she has never lacked consciousness of self, and she takes a very proper delight in their display. If she can charm the millionaire, so much the better for her pocket. But it is evidently far more amusing to capture the approval of a king.

And, republican though she be, France has still preserved her ancient love of splendour. Not only does she take pleasure in pageants, she understands the art of pageantry better than any other nation. She can stage-manage a function or a procession as easily as she can stage-manage her admirable theatre. She is mistress of the graces, as of the ornaments which lend a magnificence to life. All that she needs is an excuse, and this excuse is given her by the kings to whom for this year she prepares a welcome. Nor is this enthusiasm without its moral. A people which uncovers in the presence of any king, which follows him with a frank admiration, is surely monarchical at heart. And if only France could find a monarch worthy her tradition and her eager loyalty, might she not enjoy a greater happiness? But, alas! were the king her own, she would tire of him in a week. The fickleness of Paris makes her despair of stable government. A private citizen may be reputed to enjoy all the virtues. Put him in the Ministry, and he becomes the pack-horse of all the vices. The scurrility of the Chamber, the infamy of the press, correspond to no political principle; they merely mirror a deep-rooted hate of all authority. If France were governed by another king, the scaffold or exile would be his untoward fate. Meanwhile she is anxious to contemplate and to flatter the kings of others. It is a pretty paradox, and its explanation might baffle the ingenuity of all the psychologists.

Yet, despite the hospitality of France, the Nationalists are as angrily opposed to strangers as the Chinese. "La France aux Français!" is their cry; and though there is

no chance that France will belong to any one else, they reiterate it with a ceaseless energy. The mere idea that foreigners will visit the Exhibition and fill the pockets of Paris is loathsome to the sturdy Nationalists, and indeed on this score they have little to complain of. The Exhibition is, before all, a success for France. On all hands you hear the French language, and you might easily believe it a national *fête*. The English, not unnaturally, have kept away, and make but a poor display among the exhibitors. But the French themselves profess the keenest and most practical interest in their enterprise. They visit the fair in thousands, they picnic in the grounds, until it seems as though the whole summer would be an unbroken 14th of July. And, above all, they hustle their wits to discover what is the *clou* of the Exhibition.

The clou *of the Exhibition.*

What, then, is the *clou*, which is plainly necessary to the success of every project? The last Exhibition left us in no doubt—there was the Eiffel Tower, with the amazement not only of size but of novelty. The Eiffel Tower is familiar by this, and we must look about for a fresher curiosity. Many sensations have been suggested—the vast globe, the telescope, the house that stands upon its head. But the globe and telescope are too serious, the topsy-turvy house is too fantastic to attract. Then again there is Old Paris, which might be expected to rejoice those who are touched by the Romantic Revival, but Old Paris is too obviously arranged, and M. Coquelin has spoiled the taste for the Tour de Nesle. The *clou*, then, is hard to find, and the difficulty of the search is a high compliment to the interest of the Exhibition. Where there is so much to engage our curiosity, why should we expect to discover one object which compels the universal attention? And yet there is a *clou*, overlooked perhaps, because it is in the sight of all.

When the Exhibition has closed its doors, it is the *trottoir roulant* which will be the liveliest memory. For this admirable invention has never ceased to amuse the crowd. If it be the last word of modern ingenuity, the idea of its construction is as old as Rabelais. "We sail'd before the wind," says the creator of Pantagruel, "between a pair of crosses, and in two days made the island of Odes; at which place we saw a very strange thing. The ways there are animals; so true is Aristotle's saying, that all self-moving things are animals. Now the Ways walk there; Ergo, they are then animals. . . . I perceived that the travellers and inhabitants of that country ask'd whither does this way go? . . . Some observed, Between Midi and Fensolles, to the Parish Church, to the River, and so forth. Being thus in their right way, they used to reach their journey's end without any further trouble, just like those who go by water from Lyons to Avignon or Arles." Where could you find a better description of the *trottoir roulant?* It is the way that moves and is the animal; the men and women may (if they choose) stand still, until they reach their destination. And the Parisians, ever avid of some new thing, gaze on the rolling roadway with untiring rapture. Nor is their curiosity misplaced. Very strange is it to be carried beneath trees, and past houses, over streets, and along gardens, without expending any energy. Yet so manifestly is man a walking animal that he can hardly stand still though the roadway carries him. He must still be walking, walking to increase the speed of his journey: it is only the idle and contented who can endure to lean upon the railing and be happy. However, here is a new field of curiosity and exercise. To get on and off a path, which never stops, is an enterprise of some difficulty, and one which tempts all men to experiment. Whether so fine a project will be introduced into our cities we know not; but we know that

the real amusement of the Exhibition is the moving path, which, according to Aristotle, must be an animal. Then for the more gravely disposed there remain the two exquisite palaces of art, and for all there glitters the largest *café concert* (for such in one aspect is the Exhibition) which the world has ever seen.

SEPTEMBER.

THERE is nothing more foolish in the records of human folly than the figureheads of emotion. A man or a name may be chosen to represent an aspiration or a policy without thought of the name or interest in the man. The label, moreover, once affixed, cannot be dislodged. All the whitewashing in the world, for instance, will never clear Faustina from the unmerited stigma which disgraces her; and Richard III., despite the historian, still goes limping down the slope of fame as the crook-backed murderer. Daniel Defoe, again, will represent unto the end of time a smug emancipation which would sorely puzzle that swashbuckler of the pen; and FitzGerald, already the booty of a club, will presently be adapted to the comprehension of the nursery. The tendency, irrational though it be, is picturesque enough. It is always more amusing to contemplate men than qualities, and truth cannot rob the fool of his symbol. Besides, though chance counts for much in our ultimate reputations, many a man has forced posterity to accept him at the value which he puts upon himself, and none ever succeeded better than Marie-Jean-Paul-Roch-Yves-Gilbert de Motier, Marquis de Lafayette.

Figure-heads of emotion.

It is not for nothing, indeed, that this gentleman has been known as "the hero of two worlds." For more than a century he has been adored in America, as he has been discreetly admired in France. He has stood to both nations as the symbol of justice and freedom. The echo of his name still binds the two republics in

the chains of amity,—chains which have been enthusiastically strengthened by the statue recently set up in Paris by the women or the children of America. The practice of conferring statues upon foreign countries is inconvenient, and is not likely to be imitated by Great Britain; but for the moment, at any rate, France and America seem united in a common worship, and it is only when we inquire what Lafayette means to either country that the cloven hoof of hypocrisy shows itself.

Homage to Lafayette.

That America should pay honour to the soldier who aided her in the struggle of emancipation is just and proper. "It is through him," said an American a century ago, "that France made us free," and only after Lafayette's first return to France did Rochambeau sail for the West with his army. Wherefore we may contemplate without rancour and without regret the particular homage thus paid by an interested people. France, on the other hand, doubtless bows the knee to Lafayette *pour embêter les Anglais*, and of course she fails. England is not annoyed at an honour rendered to those who fought valiantly against her; but if France desires to exalt our enemies, why does she choose Lafayette instead of Montcalm or Dupleix? A national hero should be something more than serviceable: he should be exalted or romantic; he should be gifted with political courage or with moral splendour. And though at the age of twenty Lafayette devoted his sword to America, he lived out some sixty inglorious years of pedantry and tergiversation in his own country.

The hero of two worlds, then, had not the smallest element of heroism in his character. He might have served admirably as the symbol of constitutional pedantry or of popular philosophy. He might have been studied as an awful warning to French and Americans alike. America is the home of bustle and action; yet we find it doing reverence to a man who never was able to fit practice with theory, and who after years of political

intrigue became the tool of a blackguard like Fouché. France, on the other hand, is firmly convinced that freemasonry is a devilish contrivance, and here she is honouring a soldier who not only was a freemason, but who regarded the sacred Revolution with suspicion, and eyed Napoleon with a timid hate. Yet in spite of America and of France, there, in the garden of the Louvre, stands a statue of the narrowest, vainest egoist who ever fought for a copy-book heading, or believed that the passions of man might be controlled by a moral maxim.

Moral maxims, in fact, were Lafayette's stock-in-trade. He was peculiarly devoted to these easy abstractions which sound well, and mean all or nothing. The rights of man, whatever they may be, were his constant admiration, and he laid it down for an axiom that if a nation were oppressed, its first and holiest duty was insurrection. A man might go far with such an axiom as that in the eighteenth century, and for a while Lafayette, rich, young, and self-sacrificing, seemed a kind of ancient Roman prodigy. His vast wealth did not impair his austerity; the court of Louis XVI. had no charm for this lofty citizen, who despised his noble birth, and whose sole ambition was to help the people in whose inherent sense and virtue he implicitly believed. It is not strange, therefore, that, returned from America, he threw himself energetically into the Revolution. The year 1789 gave him a splendid opportunity for the exercise of his moral eloquence, and no doubt he babbled of the fraternity which made the gutters of Paris run with blood.

The foolish crime of July 14, which remains France's national *fête*, and which was the excuse for a lying, hypocritical legend, was hailed by him with a tepid enthusiasm, and he thought it not inappropriate to send the key of the Bastille across the ocean to Washington! But the storm, which his half-understood formulæ had helped to raise, could not be lulled by mere words, and

words were all that Lafayette had to give. He mistrusted all men, and feared all measures. The one thing that seems to have stirred his blood was a constitution, and in 1789 constitutions were more easily torn than fashioned. It is a pitiable spectacle this of Lafayette attempting to calm a mob of butchers with the suggestion of a limited monarchy! Of course the mob wreaked its fury upon him, although he had advocated the abolition of titles, and was proud to be called M. Motier. So he was burned in effigy, and greeted with dishonour as a Cæsar or a Cromwell. He was no Cromwell: had he had a drop of Cæsar's blood in his veins he might have saved France from the consequences of her madness. Yet never once did he dominate events: on the miserable October day when he rode to Versailles with the roughs, he did not lead them—it was they who pushed him to the adventure in spite of himself; and in spite of himself he climbed to momentary power and influence.

Cromwell-Grandison.

As he never long persisted in a course of action, so he was never constant to his alliances. Mirabeau, for instance, tried to make him his friend; but what union could exist between a man and a parchment? Lafayette pretended that he was shocked by Mirabeau's lack of principle; Mirabeau, of course, was outraged at Lafayette's unfailing vacillation. The truth is, that Lafayette, like all men of slender talent, hated an impulsive and commanding genius, which would have relegated him for always to a second place. Accordingly, after much chatter of mutual confidence and close friendship, Lafayette deserted the man before whose grandeur he trembled, and added one more to the list of his innocent betrayals. Mirabeau called him Cromwell-Grandison in derision; and though there is no point of resemblance between him and Cromwell, a priggish Grandison on a white horse is precisely what he was.

Thus he continued his timid little career—now in

prison, now in flight, now ruling his country, as he thought. When Napoleon appeared to gather up the broken pieces of France, Lafayette distrusted him as he had distrusted Mirabeau. Now, Napoleon did not chatter of theories and constitutional safeguards; he made himself perpetual consul and then emperor, and at every move our Grandison shuddered. Where were the Rights of Man? he asked in trepidation. Was it for this that the governor of the Bastille was foully murdered? But Napoleon justly estimated the "thin constitutional pedant," as Carlyle calls him, and Lafayette retired to his farm. The year 1814 brought him from his retirement, and after Waterloo he helped Fouché to secure the abdication and ruin of Napoleon. In the moment of defeat, his country needed a strong soldier to avenge her. But patriotism was nothing compared to the constitution, and once again the constitution triumphed.

"Clear, thin, inflexible as water turned to thin ice"—such, in Carlyle's immortal phrase, was the hero of two worlds. Yet the "water turned to thin ice" was not wholly ineffectual. The single ambition which engrossed the vanity of Lafayette's soul was to be a popular hero; and in his lifetime he was never a hero, and he was popular only in America. But after death he achieved what he failed to achieve in life. The *cabotin* that was in him has survived. The white horse and the cocked hat are still remembered. Lafayette's statue is set up in Paris, and his tomb—improperly placed in the graveyard of the Rue Picpus, where there should be no room for rebels—is visited by pious worshippers. For the sake of France and America alike, we cannot but regret the worship. There is little glory and no wit in choosing a pedant to represent the aspirations of a people.

But there is another point of interest in this ceremonial erection of a statue: it marks conspicuously the link which binds France to America. Washington, also, has

his statue, and Washington had nothing to do with France, except that the great Houdon modelled his bust. But is there anything behind these interchanges of brass or marble better than amiable sentiment? Does the interchange of statues and speeches represent a solid alliance or a fantastic sympathy? A fantastic sympathy is all that we can ascribe to them. "Les nations alliées," said Bismarck, "ne font pas une alliance," and France and America are nothing else than allied nations. Yet ever since America declared her independence she has professed a friendship for France, which has been generously returned. Nor did the services of Lafayette and Rochambeau go unrewarded. If they gave independence to America, America repaid the service by an astounding adulation of the Terror. Such men as Jefferson were well fitted to sympathise with Lafayette and his band. For Jefferson, too, reposed upon the dogma that the bloodiest republic is better than the most benign monarchy. Despite which dogma he cherished a positive admiration for Louis XVI., of whom he once wrote: "he is the honestest man in the kingdom, and the most regular and economical. He has no foible which will enlist him against the good of his people; and whatever constitution will promote this he will befriend, but he will not befriend it obstinately: he has given repeated proof of a readiness to sacrifice his opinion to the wish of the nation."

Les nations alliées.

That is higher praise than has often been meted out to Louis XVI. Yet this same Jefferson did not express a syllable of regret at the good king's death; he merely declared approvingly that the murder would render kings "amenable to death like other criminals," though, if his former estimate were true, it is difficult to define the crime of the French king. While Jefferson, who should have known the truth, received the news with so pedantic a composure, it is not remarkable that his

countrymen exulted in the blood that had been shed. History cannot match the ribald levity and callous brutality exhibited by the Americans in the months that followed the death of the king. America, at any rate, was determined to see nothing but courage and magnanimity in the Terror. The mob was frenzied with joy at hearing the death of a king, who had wished it well. The Philadelphia militia assembled at Weed's Ferry, and gave such toasts as: "May the sister republics of France and America be incorporate as light and heat!" "May the succeeding generation wonder that such beings as kings were ever permitted to exist!" But words were insufficient for these brave militiamen, wherefore they invented a noble ceremony: "the head of a pig was severed from its body, and being recognised as an emblem of the murdered King of France, was carried round to the guests. Each one placing the cap of liberty upon his head, pronounced the word 'tyrant,' and proceeded to mangle with his knife the head of the luckless creature doomed to be served for so unworthy a company."

The French Revolution in America.

Thus the tragedy was played out. "Never was the memory of any man so cruelly insulted," said William Cobbett, "as that of this mild and humane monarch. He was guillotined in effigy, in the capital of the Union, twenty or thirty times a-day, during one whole winter and part of the summer. Men, women, and children flocked to the tragical exhibition, and not a single paragraph appeared in the papers to shame them for it." In fact, only one protest was raised against the enormities of the people: the keeper of an inn between Chester and Wilmington, where the stage stopped, had a sign painted of "The Guillotined Queen of France," but his charming thought was unappreciated, and he was compelled to change it. For the rest, the poets of America celebrated the Guillotine as the Tenth Muse, and one Joel Barlow showed, in a poem entitled "The

Conspiracy of Kings," how far on the road of brutality a few maxims will carry a foolish man. Here is a specimen :—

> "Think not I came to croak with omen'd yell
> The dire damnations of your future hell.
> I know your crusted souls !
> Oh, Burke, degenerate slave, with grief and shame
> The Muse indignant must repeat thy name."

It is difficult to perceive the necessity, and that particular Muse has long ago passed into obscurity. But Joel Barlow was regarded seriously, and gravely applauded when he penned his rubbish. He was encouraged to denounce "those prolific monsters Courts and Kings" with all the violence at his command ; and Burke, degenerate slave, has outlived him and all his cant of reason and liberty.[1]

Thus it was that America paid the debt she owed to France and Lafayette ; and ever since a tempered sympathy has united the two republics. But the sympathy was not, and is not, practical ; it is merely the politics of feeling, which will never result in action. For however strong be the sentiment (or hysteria) which unites two peoples, they will only take arms together if the advantage of both be assured. At the same time, a sentimental policy has long had a charm for France, who loves Russia, "her great friend," with a constant heart and with a very shadowy dream of profit. And so French and American citizens stand on the same platform to exchange platitudes concerning Lafayette. Yet, though the politics of feeling have an appearance of generosity, they attain only one result—a mass of meaningless words and the gentle ridicule of other nations.

The criminal levity of Belgium in liberating Sipido has promptly and abundantly justified itself. We do not

[1] See C. D. Hazen's 'Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution,' a collection of astounding documents.

mean that one monstrous miscarriage of justice is enough to encourage an anarchist plot; but it is certain that the honour paid to the unsuccessful assassin quickened the hand that was already armed to strike. There are certain drugs which enable a doctor to discover a latent disease, and the enlargement of Sipido, whose hand was shaken (so to say) by the court which tried him, acted upon the political body of the world as Dr Koch's serum acts upon a consumptive frame. Instantly the disease of anarchy showed itself, and, unhappily, with fatal results. The murder of the Italian king adds one more to the list of useless crimes, and the vain attempt upon the life of the Shah proves, what indeed required no proof, that the anarchist is never inspired to his dastard's work by a just or sufficient cause. The half-imbecile Salsou can have had no grievance against the Emperor of the East: he merely obeyed the voice of his own half-witted vanity, and had he been arrested six years ago, when he was known for a dangerous imbecile, France would have been saved a scandal, and the crazy comrades of the anarchist would have been deprived of a flagrant example.

Belgium's levity.

It is clearer after each outrage that anarchy is no matter of cause and effect. As we have already pointed out, the political criminal is only impelled by vanity, hope, and cowardice. Yet the radical journalist persists in discovering a genuine attempt to redress a grievance whenever a half-witted Italian goes forth to kill. "Are there any circumstances," he asks, "in the nature or history of the country which account for it?" And he timidly answers that high taxation and dire poverty are rife in Italy. That may be so, but the dire poverty and high taxation of Italy offer no sound reason why one Italian should have murdered a President of France, or why another should have driven his dagger into the blameless heart of an Austrian Empress. The truth is that we shall never understand the causes of anarchy so

long as we seek an obvious explanation. Taxation and poverty do not affect the argument. The Anarchist is born to murder, he is not trained to vengeance; and so dangerous is his inherited complaint that governments would be wisely counselled if they shut him up as soon as they find him, lest an isolated disease should become epidemic.

The Italians have made the record, to use M. Rochefort's elegant phrase, in cutting off the heads of State. But it is not the hard circumstances of their life which encourage them. They are assassins for the same reason that Irishmen are assassins, because secret societies have always flourished in their midst. How should a country, where the *camorra* has long been a force, feel surprise at a stealthy murder? Anarchy grows faster by association than other crimes. The feeble hand is armed at a word, and where a dozen vain and ignorant agitators are met together there is a constant danger of assassination. Again, secret societies can impose their decisions upon the idlers who join them. Their orders have a definite sanction; the disobedient are easily removed; and the most abject cowardice may be driven to "action" by the fear of domestic punishment. Wherefore the Radical journalist is speaking at random when he declares that a modest taxation will abolish anarchy. "We may be usefully reminded," says he, "that the way to prevent an effect is to remove the cause." That is true enough, and the only way to prevent anarchy is to keep all the known anarchists of the world either in a prison or in a lunatic asylum. The Italians of Patterson, N.J., would be anarchists if they paid no taxes whatever, and all spent their lives, as some of them do, in the grand tour.

Now, it is this fallacy of "cause and effect" which has persuaded men to speak of "political crime," than which a wickeder expression was never devised. There is, and can be, no such thing as political crime, and if there were, it should be doubly punished as a crime without a palliating

Political crime.

motive. A crime is a crime, whatever train of thought suggests it. No political conviction can put a better face upon the murder of a lawful king. Bresci, chosen and armed by his compatriots, was not inspired by heroism. He was merely driven forth by a miserable vanity, a nameless love of publicity, which is no better (nay, far worse) than the greed which leads to burglary. The house-breaker who wants to fill his own pocket, the lover mad with jealousy, receive no mercy at the hands of righteous judges. The anarchist, whose pocket is generally filled by his friends, and who is often accompanied by a faithful mistress, has no better cause of action than the desire to see his name in the papers. Therefore the anarchist, whose motive is baser, should be more severely handled than the highway robber. Yet no sooner is the head of a State sacrificed than we hear the foolish catch-word—"political crime."

But there is another reason why the so-called political murderer should receive the heaviest punishment. By temperament and habit he is more likely to escape notice than the ruffian moved by hunger or jealousy. At school he is commonly the good boy of the class; as he grows up he would rather read Herbert Spencer than loaf in a public-house; and when he joins a secret society he is probably unknown to the police. Accordingly he is free to plot and suborn as he will. If half-a-dozen men meet together to rob a hen-roost, they are disturbed at the slightest breath of suspicion; but if they openly conspire to murder a king, they are politicians whose liberty is sacred. And though the police know both their habit and intent, the police is prevented by a rule of the game from arresting their bodies. When the harm is done, then punishment may follow, but until the blow be struck, the officers of the law seem powerless. Freedom of opinion is admirable enough, but freedom of opinion does not need the dagger and the bomb for its adequate expression, and it is far

better to prevent anarchy than to secure its punishment.

The extradition of Anarchists.

An opportunity is now given to arrest the ringleaders of an infamous conspiracy. Yet when extradition is demanded, America is content to murmur the words "political crime." We, too, have committed a similar indiscretion in the past, and though we properly punished the ineffable Most, Soho has been and still is a sheltered sanctuary of crime. At the present moment the celebrated Malatesta himself is free of our capital; yet it is commonly rumoured that his brain directs the murderer's hand, and though (maybe) he is paralysed by the strict surveillance of Inspector Melville, Europe would sleep more calmly were this dangerous madman under lock and key. But of America we have little hope. The Anarchists of Patterson, N.J., will still plot in security, and as the telegraph unites Patterson to Rome and Berlin, orders can be transmitted in a moment and with a small risk of detection. Nor is Italy the first to suffer from transatlantic notions of crime. The Fenians plotted in New York without interruption, and carried out their plots with Irish-American gold. More than that, the zeal of Pat Egan was rewarded by an embassy to Chili; and where we failed it is not likely that Italy will succeed. But unless all the nations unite to refuse the Anarchists asylum, "political crime" will flourish for ever, and the criminal will ask to be photographed, and will wonder what the papers say about him, until the end of time. For at present the game of governor and governed is unfairly played, and it is not the kings who load the dice.

OCTOBER.

Clifford v. *Grundy.*

Mrs Clifford has recently received a grievous buffet of fortune. She has been the victim of such a coincidence as will often assault those who are determined to please the public. In complete ignorance of each other's enterprise, she and Mr Grundy have been busily engaged in composing the same play. The resemblance is perfect down to the smallest details, and though the motive might easily have been found by an independent dozen, a spilt cup of tea, the symbol of emotion, and an S-shaped sofa are not everybody's properties. Nor need we be surprised that the hero of each play is a barrister: on the stage, as in fiction or in real life, professions have their fleeting popularity; and waiting the rehabilitation of the dragoon, the barrister may now claim the slippers of Berlin wool, once worked by pious fingers for the curate. Nevertheless, though much may be put down to a prevailing fashion, we are confronted by a similarity which seems to defy the laws of chance. One man and two women—these are the invariable elements of drama, unless, indeed, two men come to loggerheads over one woman. But the same scene, the same accent, the same tea-cup in the same trembling hand, and the same sofa, are an insoluble puzzle, which merely suggests the smallness of the world, the limitations of the human brain, and other platitudes. For ourselves, we should as soon presume to explain these amazing coincidences as to unravel the secret of the universal pattern, or to give a reason why the ancient Greeks told the very

stories which delight the Solomon Islanders of to-day. After all, there is a nearer kinship between two English playwrights than between Attica and the South Pacific. But state the problem in whatever terms you choose, and you will find that the safest answer is, "Give it up."

When Mr Pinero some twenty years ago produced "The Squire" at the same theatre which had rejected "Far from the Madding Crowd," the usual protests were made on either hand; but all the protests in the world, supported by extracts from notebooks and perfumed by "the scent of hay over the footlights," could not soften the coincidences nor convince the waverers. Whatever was the real truth—and the real truth will never be known—Mr Pinero's conduct was indefensible. According to the testimony of his manager, Mr Pinero had never read Mr Hardy's novel; by his subsequent confession, he had read it; and, though there is no guilt in being familiar with a masterpiece, it was plainly Mr Pinero's duty to have expunged the patent similarity from his play, if he did not suppress the whole work. Many an industrious copyist has before this laid claim to the works of others; and if two books or two plays resemble each other, he who wrote first, having an indefeasible claim, cannot be held responsible for another's echo. Some such argument as this, no doubt, has prevailed with Mr Pinero, who, by not including "The Squire" in the printed edition of his works, has deprived us of a leisurely and interesting comparison.

The previous case was rendered simpler by the already published book. Beneath the feet of Mrs Clifford and Mr Grundy there is no common ground save a story in 'Temple Bar' and a play of Scribe. We are, therefore, able to regard the coincidence in a merely speculative spirit, and to pretend that two dramatists stumbled upon the same theme in the same theatre by pure chance. But even the accidents of chance may some-

times be explained, and many answers have been proposed for this particular riddle. It is a case of literary somnambulism, says one; which is less an explanation than another statement of the case. We cannot believe that men walk like ghosts in the night, invading the studies of their rivals, and unconsciously appropriating words and thoughts which do not belong to them. But somnambulism is just as good a word as another for an obscure phenomenon, and at that we may leave it. On the other hand, those who declare that "ideas are in the air" do not speak without reason. Ideas are in the air, especially in the close air of the theatre. The dramatist is seldom a creative artist; he is but an echo of the public, and he is prepared to answer the lightest whisper of his audience with a shout. Some time since the elder Dumas held our stage, and a dozen playwrights, innocent of conspiracy, dragged a dozen "Musketeers" from their desks. They did not copy each other; they merely felt the same prompting at the same time, and obeyed their masters with all the obedience natural to them. And to-day, when Dumas Fils and Ibsen have popularised the moral problem, suggesting in the first act a moral difficulty, which they resolve by suicide or otherwise in the last, it is not surprising that two dramatists should in the same month confront two women and a man. But the trembling tea-cup is left unexplained. Ideas may be in the air. We know that Adams and Leverrier made independent discoveries of Neptune; we know that Darwin and Wallace disclosed the secrets of evolution on the same day. But S-shaped sofas are not in the air, and Darwin and Wallace remain less of a puzzle than Mrs Clifford and Mr Grundy.

Literary somnambulism.

However, it does not matter. The scandal of suspicion quickens the public interest, and maybe neither author regrets these ominous similarities. But the dis-

pute has once more raised the question of plagiarism, that vice which is grossly misunderstood and universally practised. He who steals a watch is a thief, and at first sight it seems obvious that he who steals a phrase or a thought is far wickeder than the swell-mobsman. But the obvious is not always true, and plagiarism cannot be so easily dismissed. Of course, there is such a personage as the criminal plagiarist, and he may easily be detected both by motive and performance. In the first place, he steals perforce from better men than himself, and he steals because his brain is too barren or too indolent to keep pace with his ambition. He aims at a literary reputation, and he can only hit the target by crooked methods. Naturally, also, he vulgarises that which he takes, and when charged with the offence, he declares that he has not read the works of his victim. Indeed, it is the true mark of the criminal plagiarist that he has read nothing. One specimen of the class has been known to assert that he never read 'Faust.' But this sublime ignorance is no excuse: in the first place, every man who takes up a pen to write should have read 'Faust,' and even if he have not read it he cannot help absorbing it through his pores. When, therefore, the plagiarist pleads ignorance, you may know him for a criminal, who has stealthily gone about to deceive the world, and to win an inglorious glory for himself. Yet he is merely a parasite upon literature. He does little harm, because he is easily destroyed, and because the sting which he inflicts is speedily cured. Though now and again he appears in the theatre or at the circulating library, conviction follows his offence, and after conviction he disappears into the prison of forgetfulness.

The criminal plagiarist.

But there is another kind of plagiarism, which needs no defence at our hands. In one sense the literature of the world may be described as a series of thefts. Tradition, the essence of art, is but a chain which binds

lender and borrower together. A writer who owed nothing to the past would be a monster, and it is significant that no serious person, save Walt Whitman, ever attempted to invent a new method. And even he, though he despised the rules of his art, was under a deeper obligation than he acknowledged to the newspaper and the auctioneer's catalogue. In truth, the first step to originality is a knowledge of other men's masterpieces, for only the greatest dare help themselves with both hands to a book which they have read. But since knowledge of others is necessary to originality, it follows that all men must, in their moments, be plagiarists. No man, sensitive enough to write, is insensitive to influences. The result of study is half-conscious suggestion, and as Gibbon found his irony in Pascal, as Virgil found his measures in Homer, so everybody who is worth reading has taken what suited him from the past. "Ce sont les hommes, et non pas l'homme, qui inventent," said Dumas, with admirable truth; and it would be wiser, except in cases of gross and palpable theft, if the critics left parallel columns alone, and judged each work, no matter whence it was derived, on its merits. Above all, incidents are (or should be) common property. "Difficile est," said Horace, "proprie communia dicere," confessing in these words that what is falsely called originality is easier of attainment than the distinguished use of material sanctified by others. But woe unto him who, shamelessly and stealthily snatching what isn't his, proves unworthy of his spoil, who, when he should rob like a pirate, pilfers like a tramp.

A plea for plagiarism.

The history of literature, then, is a history of plagiarism and unworthy charges. Scarcely a great man has escaped the reproach, and if the reproach were justified all would be guilty. Virgil, although he wrote "Sic vos non vobis," robbed Ennius as he chose, and answered the blame of the foolish

Virgil.

with the arrogant retort: "I did but pick pearls from a dungheap." The creator of Hamlet, also, appeared to his contemporaries as a thief. Did he not take a plot here or a phrase there, and did he not make everything he touched eternally and absolutely his own? His depredations were long since justified. Shakespeare, said Dryden in a superb sentence, "invades authors like a monarch," and with so fine a spirit was his invasion conceived that he is still monarch of the earth. But we can imagine the laugh wherewith he greeted the charge of theft. How should he, who "after *le bon Dieu* has created the most," care what he took or whence he took it? One thing is certain, that whatever territory he seized was added to his empire, and it is only the rebel who would grudge this imperious levy laid upon the possessions of little men.

Molière and Dumas.

Molière, too, seized whatever seemed useful to his purpose. "Je prends mon bien où je le trouve," is but a civil version of Virgil's "pearls from a dungheap," and the Frenchman felt the reproach as lightly as the Roman. Yet it is not enough to turn away the charge with a jest or a laugh. Plagiarism, like invasion, must be justified by its result. A poet, like an emperor, may only annex that which he can make his own. He may take nothing that does not suit his talent and chime with his humour. Shakespeare and Molière in gaily appropriating the raw material of their dramas may have inflicted an injury upon some smaller men. But literature is as pitiless as war; and, while Shakespeare and Molière have won immortality, we have forgotten the names of those who suggested some plots and even fashioned a phrase or two. And this brings us to the clear conclusion that plagiary is a question rather of criticism than of morals. All is permitted to him who succeeds. A play or a poem is not controlled by the laws which protect the purse of the wayfarer. The

clumsy workman is condemned whether he steal or not, and the master can laugh in the detractor's face. Dumas the Elder never lacked the quality of invention, yet even he dared not claim originality for his works. "As to the creation of a thing," said he, "I deem that to be impossible. God Himself, when He created man, did not dare to invent; He made him after His own image."

The masterpiece of the century.

Hark! the drums beat! the trumpets blare! One hundred thousand citizens are in the street to acclaim the masterpiece of the century. After a laborious silence of three (or is it five?) years, the most gifted lady whom the world has seen speaks once more—speaks too with that clarion-voice of satire we know so well. It is no wonder, then, that the hoardings are covered with the praise of 'The Master-Christian,' or that 'The Master-Christian' is warranted to eclipse the works of Sir Walter Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens. For in 'The Master-Christian' (we are told) Miss Corelli is at her best, and all the world knows that Miss Corelli at her best is unapproachable. Especially in the quality of courage Miss Corelli eclipses all her contemporaries. Neither the crimes of this life nor the mysteries of the life to come have any terror for her. Most people, who are all untinctured with learning, who write their own tongue with a reckless uncertainty, who have but a vague sense of words and their meanings, would shrink from the task which the most talented novelist of this or any other age has imposed upon herself. Who, indeed, save the author of 'The Master-Christian,' would dare to bring upon a mimic scene Jesus Christ and the Pope of Rome? But, as we have said, Miss Corelli is fit for any enterprise. She at least is not trammelled by reverence or decency. She has no scruples in putting her common, pert, ungrammatical sentences even into the mouth of personages princely or divine; and why, indeed, should she scruple or criticise? If her English halts,

it is the best that she has, and the basest critic must acknowledge that every licence is permitted to genius. For, alas! genius is only too rare in this sad world of ours, and when we find a solid wad of it—632 pages in all—we must doff our hats, and be grateful that we did not live fifty years ago, when fiction had nothing better to offer us than the cynicism of Thackeray or the farcical humour of Charles Dickens.

Miss Corelli's genius.

Miss Corelli, then, has genius, and plenty of it—*cela va sans dire*, as she would say herself. If she did not possess the supreme gift, we might perhaps object to her sanguine temerity. We might suggest, for instance, that a formal attack upon all the Churches should not be made by an unlettered lady, who knows not the rudiments of theology or criticism. We might point out in all modesty that to give your characters high-sounding names, and to put such speeches in their mouth as would shame an orator of Hyde Park, is wicked irreverence. We might prefer a slight knowledge of English grammar to miles of obvious rhetoric. We might urge that a fluid style was an insufficient atonement for unblushing inaccuracy. For it must be confessed (by the critic) that Miss Corelli is irreverent, illiterate, rhetorical, and inaccurate. She thinks it not unbecoming to say of Jesus Christ that "the personality of the little fellow was very winning"; she permits the Pope, who is a scholar and a gentleman, to talk like a tub-thumper; finding the poor English tongue insufficient to her purpose, she sprinkles her pages with scraps of French and Italian, hoping, perchance, that her solecisms will deepen the local colour. So when she means "silence," she gasps out *tais-toi;* so she believes that in French *nom de Jésus* is a recognised expletive; so she appears to think that a Parisian countess might say *Quelle honneur!* when she imagined herself "the leading lady" to a great tragedian. Again, if an ordinary man (or woman) of

letters choose to denounce a country not his (or her) own, he is expected to strengthen his venom with knowledge. Yet Miss Corelli, whose *sæva indignatio* is piously directed against France, displays a sturdy ignorance of that country and its literature. To call Catulle Mendès an "hysterical little boy" is a piece of folly that nothing (save genius) can excuse; and what can modern letters mean to a writer who classes Maeterlinck with Byron and Heine as "a wicked person"? But that is the advantage of genius: it need understand nothing; it may parade knowledge which it does not possess; it may commit every sin against taste and truth; and all the same it is genius, or, if it isn't, what becomes of the manifold protestations which have secured, we are told, to 'The Master-Christian' so many thousands of readers?

A humorous champion of Mr Hall Caine once declared in the bravery of print that "not even his detractors could deny him the gift of genius"; and similarly the genius of Miss Corelli does not depend upon the grudging acknowledgment of detractors. Here is her genius thick and slab for all folk to see. Her motive is not fresh,—on the contrary, it is as hackneyed a motive as she, or any other, could find; but no doubt she recognises the truth of Horace's maxim already quoted—*difficile est proprie communia dicere*—and does not stoop to win an effect by mere originality. For many years past it has been a favourite artifice of certain painters to startle the world by putting Jesus Christ into incongruous surroundings. He has been pictured at a music-hall, and at a dinner-table, and the inartistic familiarity has found an instant success. Well, Miss Corelli has achieved in fiction what M. J. Béraud has achieved in painting. She has placed Jesus Christ in the Paris and Rome of to-day; she has confronted Him with the cultured rabble that packs fashionable churches and fashionable studios. But it is not for this that we thank her. Not even in the presence of transcendent genius can we forget who

rushes in where angels fear to tread. No; we thank her for a set of romantic characters, which we could not match in the whole realm of fiction.

The Wicked Markiss.

Above all, she has brought back to life our old friend the Wicked Markiss, who reminds us of those brave days when "culture" was not, and when the 'Family Herald' rejoiced the hearts of England. And we doubt whether even the 'Family Herald' ever discovered so wicked a Markiss as the gentleman known to Miss Corelli as the Marquis Fontenelle. Poor man, he might have had the *particule;* but surely he is wicked enough without it. "Yes," sighs the beautiful countess, "I am in love with the Marquis Fontenelle! Ah! le beau marquis! He is so extraordinary!—so beautiful!—so wicked!" Is it not our old friend Aubrey Plantagenet himself? Cannot you see his rolling eye and his waxed moustache? And are you not compelled to think of George R. Sims' incomparable poems, and of the monster who in the very eye of the Norman mothers invited the high-born maids to join the revelry of the sensuous galop? But, ah! what a fine fellow is the Wicked Markiss! There is nothing mean about him. "I seldom ride in a common *fiacre*," he says sadly, "but this time I did so." How could he so far forget himself? How, indeed, save under the impulse of *la chasse?* And despite the common *fiacre*, our Markiss is capable of everything, save marriage. "To love one's wife," says he, "would be *petite bourgeosie.*" The French is not quite worthy the noble station of the gentleman, yet how fine the irony! Does it not remind you of Juvenal, the one author in ancient and modern times to whom, we have been told, our great Marie Corelli is comparable? But, alas! the Markiss don't live up to his reputation. He fights a duel with a common actor, who, in a lingo which even the Markiss might envy, describes himself as "Moi! le génie de France," and who, of course, is the Markiss's own long-

lost brother, strawberry-mark and all. The brotherhood, if we may say so, is as sure as eggs, and what wonder is it that the great heart, which seldom condescended to a common *fiacre*, broke at the revelation?

But that is the mark of Miss Corelli's genius. She carries us off, breathless and expectant, into what she herself might call the *beau monde*. Above all, she has touched vice with the finger of scorn, and she has brought Sin (with a capital) into the cottage homes of England. She has laid bare with a ruthless courage the crimes of France and of Rome. If we may believe her—and of course we may—every Cardinal is the father of a large and thriving family. And as to the Abbés of France, they are but the wicked Markiss in another costume. M. Vergniaud, in fact, runs a close second to Fontenelle himself. "I know the charm of sin!" he cries—"the singular fascination of pure devilry!" And he does. Well might he rival the flippant Abbés of the last century—in fact, we are half afraid that once again genius is caught napping, and that Miss Corelli believes that St-Evrémond and his kind still live. For upon the delicate finger of the Abbé Vergniaud there sparkles a diamond ring; with a listless hand he turns over the worldly pages of the 'Revue de deux Mondes'; and even though he does seem to believe in the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus, he is evidently a wicked, worldly, and witty person. What wonder is it, then, that "France is playing a losing game," and that St Peter's at Rome is but a "huge theatre misnamed a church"?

A portrait of the author.

But better than the Markiss, better than all the infamous clergy, is the beautiful Angela Sovrani, who (we are sure) is nothing but a portrait of Marie Corelli, drawn by the only hand and brain that are capable of understanding her. For Angela Sovrani, also, is a woman of genius, the supreme artist of her age and planet. She is not actually beautiful; but she creates around her,

wherever she goes, "an effect of beauty." Her eyes, of course, are "purple-grey and drowsy-lidded." "In herself she was a creature of remarkable temperament and character—true womanly, in every delicate sentiment, fancy, and feeling, but with something of the man-hero in her scorn of petty aims." Have we not here a masterpiece of self-portraiture? In what other colours can genius be painted? And this is not the end of resemblance. "Within the small head lay a marvellous brain, and the delicate body was possessed by a spirit of potency to conjure with." Moreover, Angela, too, was engaged upon a work which might have been called "The Master-Christian," had she not styled it "The Coming of Christ." It was a vast and painted allegory, which Raffaelle or Angelo would have been proud to sign, if only they could have achieved it; and it convulsed the Vatican as violently as a sermon of the Abbé Vergniaud. Yet for a while it seemed to fail, merely because it had not been painted by a man. Angela Sovrani had assured the most elaborate secrecy. She refused to show her picture until it was finished. "They take my ideas, and use them," she complained, "and then, when my work is produced, they say it is *I* who have copied them, and that women have no imagination." That is precisely what Marie Corelli has suffered these many years—the thefts and detractions of men. For it is well known that most men and all novelists envy the success of women. On one occasion a great sigh broke from Angela's lips when she thought: "Ah, but the world will never own woman's work to be great, even if it be so, because men give the verdict, and man's praise is for himself and his own achievements always." Even genius, then, is a poor solace to women, for man goes on living in the fool's paradise of self, and it is only when a heroine arises brave as Marie Corelli, that he hears a fragment of the truth. Yet Sappho did not miss the crown of glory,

and Jane Austen bore without complaint the misery of her sex.

Thus Marie Corelli thinks and speaks behind the mask of Angela Sovrani. Poor Angela! She, too, put her life-blood into her work, and she, too, was chiefly preoccupied by its sale. "Yes, I must work! That big canvas of mine will not sell, I fear! My father was right. It was a mistake." Of course it was a mistake if it would not sell, as none knows better than Marie Corelli, whose masterpiece will doubtless soon boast half a million readers! "What is the use of painting a picture for the world"—again we quote our Angela—"if there is no chance to let the world see it?" Obviously there is no use at all, because genius is concerned with nothing else than profit and a big circulation. And in the end Angela triumphed, as her creator has triumphed. "If you consent"—so the welcome news was brought her—"the picture will be bought, not by any private purchaser, but by the American nation." Splendid, is it not? But Marie Corelli's triumph is yet greater than Angela's. Her masterpiece is not bought merely by the American nation; it is a treasure over which America and England will dispute until the end of time.

And what we like best about Marie Corelli is her simple sense of business. Her genius is superior to the vanity which declares that art is its own reward, and that the artist should work to please himself. She finds out precisely what the public wants and gives it to them piping-hot, nor does she ever deceive herself with a foolish theory of perfection. She knows well enough that her work is not sanctified until it is sold, and she knows that every man who wields a pen is consumed with a mad jealousy at the hundreds of thousands of distributed copies. But success does not alway ensure admiration. The poor Angela is stabbed in the back by a vile man jealous of her skill, another incident to prove that Marie Corelli has composed an eloquent

chapter of autobiography. Indeed, the author of 'The Master-Christian' has received enough stabs in the back to murder an army, and we should like to believe that Florian's murderous attack upon his rival symbolised Mr Hall Caine's fury when he read the publisher's advertisement of 'The Master-Christian.' But, alas! we may not: for Angela Sovrani loved Florian, and Marie Corelli has publicly stated that she refrains from the study of Hall Caine's works on principle—on the lofty principle that he once read a manuscript of hers without approval.

The tale of Miss Corelli's genius is not yet told. Her six hundred pages hold many a sensation which we have not space to mention. The murders can hardly be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the eloquent attacks made upon all the Churches are marked by a simple sincerity which easily condones their obvious commonness. Of course 'The Master-Christian' might be condemned as ill-considered, ignorant, and illiterate. It is written (we can hear the objection of the critic) in the sort of pigeon-English affected by trippers who have spent a week on the Continent. It should raise a laugh of contempt, says the envious one, whenever it does not prompt a sigh of disgust. But we know it is a masterpiece: the publishers have told us so, and the hoardings echo the publishers. In brief, it is a work of genius, and we could not forget it if we would.

NOVEMBER.

Once in seven years, or oftener, the rulers of our country take the great democracy into their confidence. They desire what is called the mandate of the people; without a smile they declare that they will proceed upon their business in a spirit of easier confidence if supported by the free and enlightened electors; and they visit the constituencies with the determined air of soldiers who will not show fear, even at the cannon's mouth. Of course they mean no more than that seven years of office are convenient for themselves and for the country, but their attitude and speech alike suggest the lust of battle. The meanest candidate that ever sought the suffrages of the electors wears upon his head the helmet of glory, and the constant recurrence of such phrases as "fought the good fight," "desperate struggle," "brilliant victory," should indicate that the road to Westminster is thick with the bodies of dead heroes.

The process of Election.

But battle though it be, it is generally bloodless, and the candidate grows into a member of Parliament without wounding anything more serious than his sense of humour or his love of truth. It is an accepted comedy that the people must be flattered and cajoled, and the parliamentary candidate commonly arrives upon the scene of action with his mouth full of promises and compliments. How else should he make himself acceptable? More often than not he is a stranger among strangers, knowing no more of his constituents' opinions than they know of his. But what Mr Ellis would call "a stream of literature"

soon overflows the borough, and red and blue are busy demonstrating the other's crimes and his own virtues. When the free, impartial democracy condescends to silence, the candidates explain their views from the platform; but the true-born Radical has a noble hatred of free speech, and he generally prefers a lusty roar to political exposition. The real work of catching votes, therefore, is performed by an ingenious process called canvassing, and he who has never canvassed cannot understand the splendid farce of the British democracy.

The folly of canvassing.

The dictionary tells us that "to canvass" means to toss in a sheet, and we are willing to put implicit faith in the dictionary. From tossing in a sheet to moral agitation is but a step, and moral agitation perfectly defines the act of canvassing. As the process seems humiliating to the canvassers, so it should seem impertinent to the canvassed. But he who believes that is wofully misled. If a stranger called upon us, and asked our opinion of the Boer war, we should firmly and politely show him the door. If he dared to ask for whom we meant to cast our vote, we should refer loftily to the secrecy of the ballot, and make it quite clear that an outrage had been committed upon our cherished principles. But the bold democrat is not of our mind. Once in seven years he likes to indulge his vanity. For a month at least he is an important personage, and he means to vindicate his importance as savagely as he can before he resumes the baser pursuits of life. The servant, in fact, suddenly becomes the master, and since bribery has been suppressed by an unimaginative Act of Parliament, the servant is free to take out his mastery in a contemptuous patronage. He will heckle the candidate with the calm assurance that the candidate is merely there to be heckled. He will welcome all the canvassers into his house, because each fresh-comer increases his dignity. He will resent nothing save neglect. He must be visited, his vote

must be demanded, or he won't give it at all. And even though he believed the country in peril, he would vote blue against his conscience if the blues had shown him a more pertinacious attention than the reds. Let this, then, be remembered as the essence of practical politics: the vanity of the voter. Opinions are nothing, speeches are nothing, leaflets are nothing. But the voter must have his hand shaken. We have recently assisted at what is called a "desperate struggle," and we soon realised that a personal visit was the deadliest weapon that we could employ against our adversaries. Some electors, of course, will let you down easier than others. A few will be content to see a second cousin of the candidate. But the most will be put off by no substitute. "I ain't seen your friend," said one free and enlightened elector, "and I ain't goin' to vote for a man as won't shake me by the 'and." That is what patriotism means to thousands of our countrymen, and it is well that candidates should learn early that a British borough is not Utopia.

The ignorance of voters.

But there are other frivolous motives which control the voter besides the snobbery we have described. Many hundreds of citizens vote blue or red because they have always voted blue or red. "It's no use talking to my 'usbing," said a woman to us, "you can't move 'im. It's the same with elections as it is with the boat-race. Dark blue 'e's always been, and dark blue 'e'll always be." Against that profound reasoning argument is hopeless: the free voter must be left to support the colour he prefers, whether the colour represent a boat's crew or a government. Another citizen, no less zealous, regretted bitterly that he could not vote for the Tories, whose principles he preferred. "But," said he, "I belong to a Gladstone Club,—not that I reverence the old man's memory, but I can get a game of billiards there." Whence we may conclude that if Lord Salisbury desires to remain in

power, he should see to it that every constituency has a billiard-table, round whose edge nothing is preached save sound Toryism.

But though the majority casts its vote by pure accident, there remains a small number which is genuinely Radical or Tory. And it is this small number which gives a political interest to the canvasser's amusing task. For the canvasser soon discovers that politics are an affair not of opinion but of temperament. The anxious politician is born with the type of his party stamped large upon his brow. The sanguine, flat eye of the Radical is as easily recognised as his slightly parted lips or his weak chin. The sign of him is hopefulness, and he is impelled by inherited tendencies to believe that things will be better in a re-shuffle. He is a curious mixture of pride and humility. Protesting ignorance, he is voluble, and he would remodel the universe while you wait, if only he thought his modest self-assurance were properly respected. The Tory, on the other hand, has the cleaner intelligence, which takes some things for granted. His eye does not glitter with spurious hope; his chin does not recede to an unrestrained desire of destruction. He is generally a square-faced man of few words. He knows the meaning of contentment, and he lets his vote follow his opinion in silence, and with no profession of humility.

From a political point of view, then, a canvass is a vain sifting of the sand; and it is with some propriety that the Great Lexicographer interprets it in a second definition as "a beating of hemp." But, none the less, the canvasser does not lose his time if he travel the streets of London from house to house. For since the working man is on his mettle during an election, the canvasser may gauge the spirit and independence of the people. At any rate, he may visit what is called "the masses" without the hypocritical intervention of University Settlements or

The spirit of the people.

the vulgar patronage of philanthropy. And in the masses he will find the strength of the country; in the masses he will find an intelligence not wholly destroyed by the printing-press, since happily there remain a few stalwarts who can neither read nor write—who (in their own admirable phrase) are no scholars. And if he do not encounter a conspicuous interest in politics, he will find that costermongers and haddock-smokers are shrewd, honest men, with no fear of any one in their heart save of the rent-collector, and of that hideous curse to poor neighbourhoods, the insurance man, who grows rich by the thriftlessness of his victims, and who issues policies to-day in the good hope that to-morrow's poverty may cancel them.

Yet, whatever view he take of the electorate, the canvasser cannot go through an election with equanimity. Long before polling-day his sporting blood is up, and he looks upon his candidate as a trainer looks at a race-horse. He would strain every nerve to win, even if no principle were involved; and the fact that the morals of election are shaped by a set of half-intelligible laws adds a curious zest to the sport. You may borrow a carriage in which to drive a voter to the poll, but you may not hire a hansom; that is to say, you may profit by your friends but not by your pocket. You may distribute printed bills by the rubbish-heap, but none of your agents may give away a piece of ribbon. So that, as your sporting blood gets up, you feel more and more keenly the rules of the game which you are playing, until at the declaration of the poll all thought of politics has vanished, you are only conscious that your man has come in first, and you shout yourself hoarse as the crowd shouts itself hoarse at Newmarket or Epsom. Such, indeed, is the impulse which drives men to fight in the street and to break one another's head in the best of good tempers. To watch the mob when their favourite has been beaten

might give the amateur a false notion of politics. It is incredible, he might say, that sober men should come to fisticuffs over a matter which is quite impersonal. But let the amateur make due allowance for the spirit of sport, and nothing that happens after the returning officer has declared Mr X. or Captain Y. duly elected can affect him with surprise.

So the leaflets, which both sides know to be false, are forgotten. So the promises rashly given on either side are broken, and the voter, brought suddenly out of his box, is put back until the Government wants another mandate. And the one reflection that remains after an election is, that Democracy is a sorry farce. The silly paradox of those who believe that the greatest wisdom lies in the greatest number of fools is covered with ridicule. Universal suffrage is happily a sham. No member obeys the orders of his constituents; no member goes to Westminster to carry out the wishes of others. He goes there for his own ambition, to support his own friends, or to expound the theories which he keeps near his heart. And as democracy is a deceit from the point of view of the elect, so it is a sham from the point of view of the elector. Every citizen may vote—that is true. But he may not vote for whom he will. No man can be nominated if he lack money or support, and thus many steps are missing in the argument which binds together the people and the people's representatives. The leather-seller has but a small chance in Great Britain. The clubs will not countenance him; and even if he secured the patronage of the clubs, he would still be baffled by a lack of money. Thus we arrive at the reason why England is not, and cannot be, a real democracy. She collects as many voters as she can, but she does not collect popular members, and so reminds us of the hero who, when he frightened a friend by the flashing of a revolver, exclaimed, "Don't be afraid—there is no

The farce of Democracy.

danger: I collect revolvers, but I don't collect ammunition." Similarly democracy is no danger to the State. Boroughs won't go off by themselves any more easily than revolvers, and the ammunition of popular members is still lacking.

Yet for sixty years universal suffrage has been esteemed a virtue beyond the reach of discussion; and a droller theory was never put forth upon a State. We are told that the intelligence of the people is superior to the intelligence of the expert,—that any man who can make his mark upon a piece of paper is good enough to have a voice in the government of the country. We would not choose our carpenters or bootmakers on these easy terms. But the theory was accepted in 1832, and ever since its application has been widening. And the strangest truth of all is, that the extension of the franchise has had no appreciable effect upon the House of Commons. Our Government is to-day what it has always been, an oligarchy hedged about with safeguards. Nothing has changed save the form of election. The modern House of Commons, maybe, is not so finely aristocratic as the Parliament which made war upon Charles I.; yet except for its lawyers it differs little either in temper or cultivation from the House of 1830. In fact, the People sends to Westminster the same sort of men as in the old days were nominated by the great landowners. The prevailing opinion, then, is popular only in shape, and, despite the groans of the old-fashioned, the scholarship and intelligence of our legislators are very much what they were seventy years ago. The absence of classical quotation, which some deplore, implies no lowering of the standard. It merely denotes a change of manners.

A House of oligarchs.

So the democracy has proved a sham, and its failure is the country's triumph. But though its chief merit lies in its lack of success, a free form of government has its

uses. It stops the mouths of political agitators, or rather it permits their mouths to open at infrequent intervals, and by a pretence of confidence weakens the force of opposition. Nevertheless, we cannot take a moral pride in an extended suffrage, which in one aspect is merely a confession of dishonesty, a mark of the universal suspicion. A government is the country's first necessity; but nobody can be trusted to govern us unless he has first passed through a fiery ordeal. What that ordeal is matters little. The power to stand many hours upon one leg, the toss of a coin, a fearless capacity to "outroar the lion-throated seas"—any of these artifices would be as just and logical as election by a free and enlightened democracy. But England, above all other countries, has got on without logic. She has prospered by accident, and found a reward even in her follies. Intent upon choosing the wisest counsellors she may, she invites to the choice all those who by temper and training are manifestly unfit for discrimination, and the result is the same as when rotten boroughs were esteemed a national bulwark.

Democracy in letters.

But if in politics democracy has happily proved inefficient, it has won a more showy success in the field of letters. Yet even here its success is apparent rather than real, and if we revise our definitions we shall find that the people has not yet reached literature with its sacrilegious hand. It has merely achieved a spurious imitation. In the old days, before the advent of a literate democracy, a distinction was made between literature and printed matter; but to-day the old differences are commonly abolished, and explanations are necessary for those who would not confound the works of Homer with the printed legend of a confectioner's bag. We are all men of letters now, and in nine cases out of ten a pair of scissors is more useful than a grey goose-quill. Yet, however great may be a man's talent, however sedulous his industry, he cannot

proclaim himself author without some slight experience. True, those who lack the necessary experience are few enough; but a thoughtful gentleman who elegantly signs himself "£600 a-year from it" has recently condescended to show the few novices that remain "How to Write for the Magazines." The trick, though it may be learned by most, is not quite so easy as it looks, and we confess to a mild surprise at our guide's generosity. It is evident that he is, what he would term himself, "a past-master in the art," for he makes at least £600 a-year. But there is nothing mean about him, and if you will spend three-and-six, your income may easily rival his. Think of it, you poor clerks and starving counter-jumpers! Six hundred pounds a-year are within your grasp, all gained by a profession which once did not shame a scholar and a gentleman.

What, then, must we do in order to write for the magazines? Well, first of all we must make up our minds to be "professionals," and shun the suspicion of the amateur like the plague. Now, the amateur (we are told) writes only when "he feels inspired," and is therefore a very pestilent fellow. Inspiration, indeed! While the amateur pensively awaits it, the professional has knocked off three or four "snatchy" little articles for 'Pearson's,' which we hear, not without a pang of astonishment, is "the most thoughtful and literary of the weeklies." The amateur, again, lacks "business capability," and that, as every tyro knows, is the corner-stone of literature. Wherefore, if you would sit by Shakespeare's side, if you would wear the bays upon your harassed forehead, first of all and last of all cultivate "business capability." Conduct everything on "purely business lines." Don't spend twopence on sealing-wax when a penny will do the trick; find out the best markets for ink and papers; and buy your scissors wholesale from a well-known Sheffield firm. It may be said that Milton knew nothing of these dodges. But

then Milton did not write for the magazines, and in the seventeenth century literature was merely an affair of the inspired amateur. An author, whose fame is as wide as the world, attributes "a good deal of the fame he now enjoys, and of an income that goes well into the third thousand annually, to his superior business instincts in such affairs as have been mentioned." That is to say, he watched the cost of paper and pencils, he knew precisely how many penny stamps could be bought for a shilling, and no man of his generation better deserves the renown and income which are his to-day.

How to write.

The novice, having learned the cost of the raw materials, must next learn to combine them in the most profitable fashion. And at the outset he must resolutely put from him the disgrace of personal vanity. He must not write that which is consonant with his talent (if any); he must sternly subordinate his own taste to the taste of his editor. The monster who believes that he has something of his own to say, who is impelled to express his own thoughts, is no better than the inspired amateur whom we have already demolished. It is the business of a literary gent to express not his own thoughts but the thoughts of his readers—to produce "what is *wanted* rather than what *he* wants," if we may quote our mentor's exquisite phrase, italics and all. Above all, he must avoid what is called "high-class literature." "The public in general abhor it, and hate it with a deadly hatred;" and since the public swells the balance, which is the only mark of genius, "high-class literature," such as 'Zanoni' or the 'Waverley Novels,' should be an awful warning to the conscientious "professional."

But even when he has determined, in spite of vanity and inspiration, to suppress himself, the literary gent is only at the beginning of his difficulties. Where shall he live? That depends upon whether his game is stories or articles. Articles are the better branch, but they de-

mand a higher "business capability" than stories. They also exact residence in London, because eavesdropping is more conveniently practised in the metropolis, and it would be idle to contribute to that splendid weekly 'M.A.P.,' for instance, from the remote countryside. However, if the novice do not "move in artistic and high-class society," if he have no keyhole at which to listen, he had better stick to fiction, and then he can live where he like and lose nothing by the indulgence. This point settled, the rest is easy. A typewriting machine (on the hire system), a few balls of twine, a packet of paper-fasteners, a cheap camera, a bottle of gum, a scrap-book, and a pair of scissors are all that is needed to make the perfect author. Of course he should also know how to find the appropriate magazine. He must not send to the 'Lady's Realm' a work which would better adorn the golden page of 'Tit-Bits'; he must not confuse the famous Harmsworth with the renowned Pearson; but with a little skill he can make a directory for himself, and so determine the best field for his "bright and chatty" articles.

One last danger remains to be avoided. The author must not be too well educated; and how closely imminent is the risk will appear to any one who remembers that reading, writing, and ciphering are imposed by an Act of Parliament. It is a pity, of course; but when the Education Bill was presented to Parliament the true authorship was not invented, and the few scribblers who then drove a quill neither possessed business capability nor followed the rates *per* thousand with a proper exactitude. Otherwise, no doubt, a special class for authors might have been provided at every board-school, that literary talent might escape the pitiless blight of knowledge. For, says the gentleman who makes £600 a-year from it, "education should not be too high-class in order to write for the 'popular papers,' or it may overreach itself." It may, indeed, and we weep when we consider

the unnumbered men of genius who to-day might be saving money on sealing-wax and string, if only they had left in the Third Standard instead of the Fourth. "The public hate any kind of writing"—again we quote our philosopher—"which shows that its author ranks himself or herself far above the ordinary class of people in knowledge or ability." Yet we are of good heart. The "ordinary class" is still large enough, and, thank God, the cad is imperishable.

Instructions to young authors.

Briefly, then, we would suggest the following instructions for young authors. Be ignorant, and keep your ignorance inviolate. Be unscrupulous, and betray all the secrets which friendship or amiability intrust to you. Empty your mind (it should be easy), and echo with what accuracy you may the resounding emptiness of the general. Be economical of postage; your best method is to smear the corner with a wet finger, and refrain from stamping your envelope. The editor will then pay twopence, and believe you the victim of a dishonest postman. Write about nothing that is not trivial, and express no opinion that is not ignoble. Dream of money, and respect all men according to their balance at the bank. Keep a scrap-book, neatly indexed, and then a petty theft can save you the trouble of putting together ungrammatical sentences. Be chatty, be bright, respect your work as little as you respect yourself, and the world's respect will increase every time your name is in print. So at last you shall make the much-envied "four figures," which you would never reach at a humdrum, honest trade; and the politeness of your banker will be a complete answer to the ruffians who suggest that the art of literature has as little to do with "business capability" as with a changing fashion. But that the old romance may not utterly die, declare loudly that you "love your work," and never confess which "department" pleases you best, the pur-

chase of cheap photographs (on which you may make a commission of £30 a-year), the pasting up of your scrap-book, or the contemplation of the nimbly earned guineas.

Such is the ideal raised up by an exultant democracy, and lofty as it appear it has not yet o'ershadowed the world. The man who makes "£600 a-year from it" is merely miscalling things. It is part of his essential indelicacy to use the word literature, and we wonder that he is able to spell it aright. But as though to prove that his avarice is of no account, to remind us that writing is still pursued in some places for its own sake, the works of T. E. Brown come into our hands, and we realise at once that the rag-bags are but incidents of dishonour, which shall surely pass. Now, T. E. Brown has long been known as a poet of sentiment and character; he is revealed in his 'Letters,' most wisely edited by Mr Irwin (London: Constable), as a prose-writer of untiring spirit, as a critic whose very waywardness is interesting. The complaint is frequently made that the art of letter-writing is dead; yet here are two volumes which are worthy to be set side by side with the classics of their kind, and not lose in the comparison. For Mr Brown had all the gifts which go to the production of perfect letters. Fancy, learning, wit, courage were his in abundant measure, and were made all the livelier by a certain petulance. Above all, his letters are the letters of a poet and a scholar. As the contemplation of nature prompted him to an eloquence almost devout, so the classics prompted him to impeccable criticism. Few writers have discoursed more wisely of Sophocles and Euripides, of Hugo and Flaubert, of Petrarch and Milton, than T. E. Brown. But his taste had a curious limitation: no sooner was modern literature his theme than he judged it from the point of view of the "sobber," which he declared

T. E. Brown, poet and letter-writer.

himself to be. For the moment he forgot the old inflexible standards; he felt only the sentiment which shook him to admiration; he could call 'Trilby' a piece of honeysuckle, and applaud Hall Caine, perhaps with tongue in cheek, as a kind of Shakespeare.

Yet even when you disagree with him, you feel neither displeasure nor regret. You only feel that you would have given much to have met him in argument, and to have witnessed the splendour of his paradoxes. For the truth is that, behind his scholarship, behind his wide and deep tincture of letters, there glimmers always the natural man. As his poems smell of earth and sea and sky, so his temperament sweeps even his own opinions away in a gust of passion, and he is driven to praise many foolish books which a quieter judgment would assuredly have condemned. But what is more memorable than these disagreements is, that T. E. Brown kept his valiant enthusiasms fresh unto the end. And if we judge him from his works, we may trace a clear image of his mind and character. He was a Rabelaisian in the highest sense. "There are nice Rabelaisians," he once said, "and nasty Rabelaisians, and the nasty are not Rabelaisians at all"; and while there was no suspicion of "nastiness" in him, he appreciated the full and honest flavours of life, and never looked out upon his fellows "through one hole." Withal he was, as he said himself, a true Celt, who preferred kindliness to candour, and who would have often suppressed a frank opinion rather than give pain. And this ardent poet, and yet more ardent mariner, was bound for many years of his life to uncongenial tasks. His real business was to be a schoolmaster; but a hearty dislike for his profession was the best safeguard, and the poet always rose superior to the pedagogue. Now and again he expresses the tragedy of his career in verse or prose. "O broken life" he wrote in the lines to Clifton,—

> "O broken life! O wretched bits of being,
> The rhythmic, patched, the even and the odd!
> But Bradda still has lichens worth the seeing,
> And thunder in her caves—thank God! thank God!"

So when the irksome duty of Clifton appalled him, he thought of Bradda and was content.

But while he disliked the routine of teaching, scholarship never had a more loyal champion. He was against new studies, new schools. "Anything that takes off good men from the Classics," said he, "is to be deprecated;" and master of English as he was, he frankly confessed that "the twaddle of these English scholars is endless." Wherefore he supported the study of Greek with all his energy, and, when modern literature appalled him, turned in contentment to Greek or Latin. But his letters are proof enough that, despite the mill of Clifton, life was not unkind to him. The noblest pleasures were always his, the pleasures of old books and of the open air.

When a critic omitted his name from a list of minor poets, he declared with a truthful irony: "Perhaps I am among the major." Assuredly among the major he takes his place. His works are published in the Globe edition with the masterpieces of Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, which is as near a final consecration as a poet may expect. But in T. E. Brown there were two poets — the English and the Manx— and the difference is remarkable. The Manxman is distinguished by an easy volubility, a fervid narrative, a quick sentiment. The stories in verse which make up the 'Fo'c'sle Yarns' stand by themselves in literature. Their spirit could not breathe in a well-ordered body; a familiar style is the essence of their vitality. They own no master, they will establish no school; but there is not one of them which is not vivid with character, palpitant with the right emotion. The English poems, on the other hand, afford a surprising con-

trast. Such a work as the 'Epistola ad Dakyns' will endure with the language. And what astonishes us the most is the classic grace which informs the most of them. The poet's fancy is now as lively as the inspiration of the Greek Anthologists, now as delicate as the devices of our Cavaliers. But the great influence upon him is Milton, whose harmonies are heard in many a stately line. Thus it is our good fortune to study this artist in prose and verse at a time when ignorance and avarice are doing their worst for literature, when few men are secure from the insolence of "bookmen" or from the squalor of prying paragraphs. Yet, so long as masterpieces like these encourage us, may we not look upon the "magazines" with indifference, and smile at the smug content of the well-rewarded democrat?

DECEMBER.

The war is drawing to the close of its first stage, and the camp-followers of falsehood and slander enjoy their triumph. Our War Office is assailed, as though its chiefs had ruined the empire to fill their own pockets. Our generals are criticised, as though they were actors who had failed to satisfy the audience of a first night. And now that we have won the battle, changing as we won it the ancient art of war, there is one question that may lawfully be asked,—Shall we again gladly suffer the insolent condemnation of the inexpert? Shall we again show the first vulgar urchin that presents himself into the stalls, and let him frame whatever opinion his ignorance forces upon him of a performance which means life or death to thousands? We believe not, and we congratulate ourselves that, after the experience of South Africa, journalists and other busybodies will be excluded from our camps until the end of time.

Camp-followers of falsehood.

For the adverse opinion of the Continent we care not a rap. The joy of France and of Russia at a supposed mishap is a tribute not only to our courage but to their cowardice. They rejoiced every time that their journals announced the fall of Ladysmith, because they hoped that the foe they dared not face had been vanquished by another. Again, the slanderous obscenities that have been circulated abroad merely betray a vice of manners, which "the most polite people" in Europe may explain as it chooses. Lord Rosebery, in a moment of Radical enthusiasm, once declared that there

must be something wrong with a nation which could arouse so many foreign enmities. The study of history should have taught him that the twin fountains of hate are fear and jealousy.

The reproaches of our enemies, then, are welcome to our ears. If France and Russia are lulled to security by the falsehood of caricatures and politics, so much the better for us. But there is another kind of slander which, while it is subversive of discipline, can easily be avoided, and that is the slander of the war correspondent. This gentleman (or his employer) seems to believe that war is conducted for his peculiar benefit. Though we have discoursed of him before, his enormities will generously repay a further study. There is nothing magnificent about him save his pride and the privilege of print. Though he does not share the hardship of the campaign, he has no scruple in blaming the brave men who sacrifice their lives. But, says he, my paper backs me, and I can publish whatever tale I choose. And so, since five hundred years have not convinced the world that the printing-press is the father of lies, the journalist still holds a position of force and trust. He says what he will; he accuses large classes of his fellow-men without shame or hesitancy. Setting no bounds to his presumption, he describes manœuvres of whose import he is ignorant; and knowing no other contest than a football match, he pronounces with an easy nonchalance upon complicated operations. Nor is he content with the psychology of battle which satisfied Stephen Crane when he wrote his 'Red Badge of Courage.' Divination would be useless to him if it were not impossible. He must write, so he says, with his eye on the object; he must rattle his readers with an "impression" which never could have come to him, and the result is "war correspondence."

The war correspondent.

A pitiful result, truly,—of hazardous guesses and

hasty generalisations. But after their insolence, the worst crime of correspondents is a light-hearted levity, in which their proprietors and editors must share. Some weeks since one of them attempted to meet the common charge of falsehood and exaggeration, and he met it after his own bluff, blustering fashion. "I have endeavoured to do my level best," said he, "to write the truth, not looking for pay or glory, but simply for my wages as a working journalist." Of course he has won no glory, and doubtless his hard work deserved the wage he got. Yet he and his fellows forget that it is disgraceful to assume a responsibility for which they are not fit. This gentleman who did his level best would doubtless prove a most efficient reporter in a police-court; but he is merely boasting when he mentions the truth and himself in the same sentence. For truth is hid at the bottom of the well, and it is not every man who ruffles the water that can entice it to the surface. The reporter who could tell the truth about a war, who could understand the object at which his army aims, must be an expert in a difficult science; and he may not criticise what appears to his facile mind a disaster, unless a wide knowledge of military history or a patient experience of warfare provides him with a just and modest standard of comparison. In brief, truth is not a matter of morals nor of will. Humility and learning alone can find it, and even when it be found it cannot be revealed to others save by a writer who seeks a lurid effect as little as he hopes to air a prejudice.

To give many instances of indiscretion would be out of place. One does not break a flea on a wheel. Yet there are one or two gentlemen whom we cannot pass by in silence. A certain writer, Mr Hales, for example, whom we have already quoted, for many months did his best to discredit the army. Though he comes, we believe, from Australia, and has not yet discovered the difference between blank verse and the journalese of Sydney, he has

a profound contempt for the British officer. He finds him ungentlemanly, incompetent, and fantastic. He objects to his manner of speech, which of course differs from the dialect to which his own delicate ear is attuned. And having, as he thinks, made these brilliant discoveries, he hastens to share his newly acquired knowledge with the British public. It is idle for Lord Roberts to assure his readers that our officers have brilliantly discharged their duties. Mr Hales knows better, though his experience of warfare and gentlemen is necessarily not so wide as our field-marshal's. But, by Jove! he is a free journalist, who can say what he chooses, and not even the censor has a right to disturb him in the discharge of his duties. So boasts the journalist; yet he might remember that outside Fleet Street he finds a harsher master than his trade imposes upon him, and that on the battlefield he must obey a sterner discipline. He should cheerfully take his rank below the youngest officer; honour should oblige him to refrain from criticism of his superiors, as the Army Act might oblige him by the pain of death. Yet there is hardly a single correspondent who has not set himself high above the Commander-in-Chief, who has not patronised a general or two, and who has not covered the private soldier (or the Tommy as he is impudently called) with a shallow sentimentality.

Calumnies against British officers.

Mr Harding Davis's calumnies, printed with circumstance in a respectable magazine, are inspired by the same spirit of insolent patronage. But happily they were long since refuted by Captain Haldane and other gentlemen who passed many weeks in the Model School of Pretoria. None the less it is curious to note the twist which malice and wounded vanity commonly give to the reporter's mind. Mr Davis, hitherto eminent as the inventor of Jaggers, found the British officers imprisoned in Pretoria so ill-mannered that "what little service I had planned to render them was made impossible." To read such stuff

we might believe that once a man became a reporter he ceased to be human or humorous, and "Richard Harding Davis withholding a Service from a British Officer of whose Conduct he disapproves" is a subject worthy to be frescoed in the office of the New York 'Journal.' Yet the man does not know he is absurd. He forgets that in these matters character is the true test of credibility, and that the "sportsmanship" of British officers cannot be assailed by him. But he, no doubt, has doctored a wounded vanity, and we may congratulate ourselves that our countrymen were saved the humiliation of his little services.

Censure of the censorship.

However, in nothing have the war correspondents shown their unfitness for duty more clearly than in their censure of the censorship. They, at any rate, are not troubled by any foolish notions of discipline, the quality which before all others gives nobility to warfare. They, in their pride, would yield obedience to none, and though the condition of their trade is a strict censorship, they are valiant in abuse when they get home. From the intemperate language which some of them have used, we might conclude that war was arranged merely as a spectacle for the reporter's eye, and that any officer who deemed it his duty to check the reporter's "impressions" was a traitor to his country. The correspondents, in short, have mistaken a privilege for a right, and have not understood that the censor who lets a single message through has conferred a benefit for which the gratitude of a lifetime is insufficient. Once upon a time there was a general who, misliking the censorship, let the correspondents send home what messages they pleased at their own risk. "But," said he, "your despatches will be telegraphed back to me, and if any offend me, I shall put him out of camp." Such a policy as this, sternly enforced, would be the best antidote to the correspondents' arrogance.

Our war correspondents, then, have consistently in-

jured us. If perchance they have sent home early news, they have helped the cause of our enemies. Worse than this, they have done their utmost to shake the faith of our soldiers in their officers, and thus to destroy discipline. Suppose the rank and file, who believe in the sacredness of printers' ink, read an impudent depreciation of the colonel set over them, will they fight with a better spirit? Will victory easily alight upon the shoulders of him who, in a paper amiably sent from home, is told that he is being driven on to certain death? Again, the vanity of the war correspondents has persuaded them to take the generals under their mag nificent protection. Each of them has a favourite, whom with all the glory of a vast circulation he condescends to applaud. The 'Morning Post,' for instance, will permit none of its colleagues to depreciate Sir Redvers Buller, while the gentleman who does the war for the 'Manchester Guardian' cries "Hands off Lord Methuen!"

It would be shameful if it did not raise a smile; but so long as journalists are allowed to ride up and down battlefields, so long shall we find these knights of the ink-pot patronising "mere soldiers" with the proud ignorance of pothouse politicians. Nor is the tale of their sins half told. Having corrected the popular opinion of our generals, having contradicted the despatches of the Commander-in-Chief, and condemned his policy, they show that they are still human by a minute attention to details. Wherefore they fall to glorifying the non-essential. They discover that the delivery of letters 7000 miles away from home has been irregular, or that a few chocolate-boxes have not reached their destination. Instantly they clamour for reform. "What is the War Office about?" they ask indignantly. "Shall we any longer endure this infamous incapacity? Is it not time that a business man controlled the empire!" Thus they manufacture their tiny sensations; thus they

debase the proper dignity and purpose of warfare, and, with their employers' sanction, degrade a campaign to the level of Mr Pinkerton's picnics.

There are many reasons, therefore, why journalists should not be encouraged at the seat of war. Can one single argument be adduced in their support? We have only to look at the mass of hastily vamped-up literature which cumbers the book-shops to know that it has no other than a commercial value. The real historian of the war, if he arise, will hastily brush it aside, and will look for his facts in the full despatches sent home by Lord Roberts. There were many wars fought before the telegraph-wire made all things common; and though Cæsar and Marlborough were not hampered in their movements by a set of irresponsible journalists, we are not ignorant of their campaigns. The works of the correspondents, then, are not even the raw material of history; and we may ask in wonderment, What is their value? They amuse the stay-at-home citizen, says the apologist, and they bring notoriety to the newspapers. The notoriety of the newspapers is a matter of national indifference, and the stay-at-home citizen may exist very well without the stimulus of impudent falsehood. In brief, the habit of war correspondence is an evil which knows no mitigation, save the rumour that the expense incurred during the past year has emptied the till of many a journal.

The uselessness of the correspondent.

Yet we cannot hold the poor correspondent solely guilty for the harm which he inflicts. His editor and his proprietor must share the responsibility. For they impose upon the first comer a task which cannot be honestly and judicially performed. "Go out and see," they say in effect to an industrious member of their staff, and they forget that the human eye has its limitations. However highly it be trained, it cannot accept more than a certain

The only remedy.

number of impressions. It begins by looking; it ends by seeing in phrases. In truth, all the tricks of our most renowned correspondents could be taught to a monkey, and so poor a result as has been achieved is dearly bought by the loss of honour and dignity. Nor has any safe remedy been devised. Mr Battersby suggests that for the future the correspondent should be isolated from the telegraph-wire. The suggestion is wise, so far as it goes. But it would be better still to isolate the correspondent not only from the telegraph-wire but from the battlefield itself. Let him stay at home in Fleet Street with amateur nurses and hospital-spies, and criticise his superiors. His judgments will neither gain truth nor lose venom.

W. T. Stead and "a British officer."

Mr W. T. Stead, for instance, has not visited South Africa; yet his malignity fades not in the air of England. He has recently published a monstrous letter, which purports to be written by a British officer. "How we are waging War" is the title of this precious document, which is a fine mixture of falsehood and bad feeling. The officer does not give his name; "the precautions necessitated by the severity of the censorship prevent" that—at least so says Mr Stead, who will get few to believe him. The officer is obviously not hampered by the censorship, for his pretended letter is printed in London. He withholds his name for one of two reasons—either he is ashamed of himself, or he has no name to give. If, indeed, he be more than what Mr Stead might term an "alleged" officer, if he be a soldier honestly believing the lies he is said to have written, he would long since have broken his sword. But we prefer to think that there is no such person as this British officer, and that if he be not W. T. Stead himself, then he is another man of the same name. The style and tactics displayed in the letter are familiar to us. The "officer" is crammed with rhetorical tags,

and contradicts himself from line to line. In one paragraph he "excludes isolated acts and crimes," because they are "due to the passions and vices of humanity." In the next he falls back heavily upon isolated cases, "that he may not be accused of dealing with generalities only." Well, we do not propose to argue with this last ghost of Mr Stead's, this poor, silly phantom dressed up by the Good Man in the tattered rags of a soldier's uniform. Rather, we would wish for its contradictions the widest circulation. Here, in large type, ornate with headlines, is the bitterest calumny which the enemies of England can devise, and no child could read it without detecting its false facts and fallacious reasoning. Moreover, as we have said already, character is the test of credibility, and even if the "officer's" effusion contained one single consistent charge we would not believe it. Mr Stead's careless handling of the truth is notorious, and were it for a moment possible that a British officer should recklessly bring unsupported and contradictory charges against his comrades, we know that no considerations of censorship would persuade him to suppress his name. In brief, Mr Stead has found another ghost, and in all honesty we declare that we prefer Julia.

But Mr Stead's documents have a kind of psychological value. They reveal a character happily rare in the world's experience—a character of arrogant sentimentality. With nothing but a sanguine temper and a flood of tears to back him, Mr Stead is ready and anxious to rule the world. He would masquerade as an amateur Providence; he would interfere with all men's business, and brook no interference himself. Many years ago he defined government as a glorified eavesdropping. He would have an ear—his own as often as possible—at every keyhole, and by adroitly using the information thus collected, he would compel even his enemies to acquiescence. Wherefore his friends

have called him "good," and truly he is "good" with a "goodness" which most men would avoid. For instance, he does not count among his virtues the faculty of sifting truth from falsehood. He thinks it not improper to bring charges which he cannot substantiate, and when, with an active printing-press to aid him, he would calumniate large classes of valiant, self-sacrificing men, he does not shrink from anonymous slander. To give the lie to our generals is, even for a "good" man, a dangerous enterprise, and Mr Stead embarks upon it cheerfully with a quotation from Olive Schreiner!

His firmest conclusions rest upon the shifting sand of report, and the following is as good a specimen as another: he denies that the Boers misused the white flag, on the authority of a single man, who himself speaks by hearsay. "Dr Conan Doyle," says Mr Stead, "gives that calumny its death-blow." Is Dr Conan Doyle, then, another Providence near the throne of Stead? How else should he give that "calumny" its death-blow? If Dr Doyle's word is absolute in the discussion, we must suppose that, like a bird, he could be in several places at once, that he was present at every battle, that he had a better chance of observing every small engagement than all the officers in command. If Dr Doyle has not these miraculous properties, we prefer to believe our generals, who have witnessed and recorded the misuse of the white flag and other treacheries. But since Mr Stead is so ready to accept in patient humbleness the testimony of Dr Doyle, why should he refuse credence to British officers, who have had at least as good an opportunity of observation as the author of 'The Great Boer War'? The truth is that, for all his "goodness," Mr Stead will only recognise such evidence as suits him, and no evidence suits him unless it is to the discredit of his own country.

Not long since Mr Stead declared that he regretted he

was an Englishman. He may be assured that his regret is not so poignant as ours; but the absurd assertion brings us to another point in the Good Man's character. He is of those whose vanity persuades them to hate their own country, who make it a point of honour to assail their compatriots on the lightest pretext or none. Of these political cannibals Fox is the great example, after whom poor Mr Stead limps with what bravery he may. The type is common enough all over Europe, though it is most generally found among subject races. The Jews, for instance, are often the keenest of Anti-Semites, and M. Drumont's crazy hatred of the chosen people is but an expression of wounded pride. But Mr Stead's motive for hating England is, we fear, even less disinterested than M. Drumont's motive for assailing his brothers. For he attacks his fatherland merely because that fatherland refuses to accept his governance. Once upon a time Mr Stead believed that he was a power in England, but one by one his illusions have been shattered. He knows to-day that no serious Briton will turn a sympathetic ear to his ravings, and he betakes himself cheerfully to Britain's enemies. So he is no more than a curiosity, an interesting specimen of cannibalism, who has rarely satisfied his rapacious maw. Let us, then, put him in a glass case with a pin through his back, label him in the best Latin that entomology affords, and straightway forget all about him and his unhappy appetite.

Mr Stead's regret.

It is pleasant, indeed, to turn from a mass of irresponsible criticism to the career of a hero who, better than any, understood the censorship of the press, and who never permitted a busybody to question his actions. We can easily imagine how Napoleon would have treated war correspondents, had such persons come within his ken; we know well how short would have been the shrift of Mr Stead under the Emperor's auspices. For there was a grand simplicity in Napoleon's temper, which

made his worst misdeeds heroic; and even in disgrace he did not lose the faculty of terror. Wherefore he has so tightly laid hold of the general imagination, that the slenderest record of his words and deeds is readable and read. At St Helena he was sometimes peevish, because he did not suffer restraint gladly; yet Lord Rosebery's 'Napoleon: The Last Phase' (London: Humphreys) adds to our interest without decreasing our admiration. It may be said at once that the book is temperate and efficient; it is in no respect a great work; it does not rise to eloquence, nor convince its readers by happily found phrases. But it is a good specimen of the bookmaker's art (we hope Lord Rosebery, the sportsman, will not mistake our meaning), and it is packed with entertainment from beginning to end. The author has studied the mass of literature which concerns his subject with laudable energy; he has done his best to sift truth from falsehood (and none knows better than he the atmosphere of deceit in which Napoleon chose to live); and if he be too lenient to the hero, too harsh to the man whose ill-fortune it was to guard him, the leniency may be attributed partly to political bias, partly to a natural love of the grandiose and picturesque.

The last days of Napoleon.

Now, it is one of the puzzles of politics that Napoleon, the greatest tyrant of modern times, should have been and should remain the idol of the Radical party. The man who hated democracy because he feared the people, who would permit no freedom of thought or speech within his dominions, who shot a burgomaster and flogged an actor, who wisely suppressed newspapers and hampered the theatre, was in his own time beloved by the Liberals of England, and is to-day stoutly championed by Lord Rosebery. The attitude of our ancient Radicals is quite intelligible. Napoleon was sworn to destroy England; Liverpool and Castlereagh were sworn, with Wellington's aid, to protect the British Isles. And since nothing

The Jacobin point of view.

that Liverpool and Castlereagh could do was right, it was evident to thousands of Englishmen that Boney was an angel of light, whose advent in London might have seemed a national triumph. To-day the reasoning is not so clear, while it is less personal; yet Lord Rosebery, in doing rather more than justice to Napoleon, is a little less than just to the British Government.

In the first place, he confuses the argument. Napoleon was so great, he suggests, that he should have been treated with every kindness. Concerning the grandeur of Napoleon, there is and can be no discussion; but it is the very grandeur of Napoleon which best justifies the severity of Lord Bathurst and Sir Hudson Lowe. Put all hypocrisy on one side, forget for the moment the splendid element of romance, and you cannot wonder that the English Government was resolute to keep their prisoner safely under lock and key. For many years the Tories of England had persisted in a struggle upon which depended the very existence of their fatherland. They had vanquished their enemy at a vast expense of blood and treasure, and there the task should have ended. They did not seek the capture of Napoleon; he came to them uninvited, because he knew that on the Bellerophon lay his only hope of safety. Lord Liverpool sorrowfully accepted the charge. "If the King of France does not feel himself strong enough to treat him as a rebel," wrote Liverpool to Castlereagh, "we are ready to take upon ourselves the custody of his person." We undertook the custody of his person, and ever since we have been assailed by the very men whose fathers would have incontinently put him to death.

There is, therefore, an obvious hypocrisy in the common view of our conduct and responsibility. We were acting, let it be remembered, not merely for ourselves—we were the watch-dogs of Europe; and most men shared the belief of Napoleon himself, that he would

return in triumph from St Helena, as he had returned from Elba. In Europe many friends were left him, besides our own Jacobins. He could once more have gained the control of vast wealth, and the superiority of his temperament was conspicuous as ever. What, then, could England have done? She could not shoot him—that would have been the choice of France. She could not lock him up in a jail—that might have been the policy of Russia or Austria. She did the best that was possible under the circumstances—she sent him to St Helena, with as much liberty as ever a prisoner enjoyed, with a carriage and six horses, and with an income of £12,000 a-year. For her pains she has endured eighty years of obloquy.

Not that we would give an unqualified approval of our countrymen's conduct. Rather we would suggest an apology, which has been too often withheld. The Tory Ministry of 1815 was rather dogged than intelligent, and they made their first mistake when they appointed Sir Hudson Lowe as governor of St Helena; for Sir Hudson Lowe, admirable soldier and honest man as he was, was neither tactful nor diplomatic, and he was asked to pit his tact against the tact of the greatest diplomatist in the world. On the other hand, we do not share the universal contempt of Sir Hudson Lowe, which none can feel who has attentively studied Mr Seaton's valiant defence. But it is clear that Lowe was not the man for the place. He was at once too firm and too yielding. He strained at gnats and he swallowed camels. He conscientiously strove both to please Napoleon and to win the approval of Lord Bathurst. He tolerated the intriguers who made up the Imperial Court; and it is small wonder that, irritable himself, he increased the irritation of the others. For he faced no ordinary task, no ordinary antagonist. No sooner did Napoleon land in St Helena than he devised *la*

In defence of Sir Hudson Lowe.

politique de Longwood—a plan cunningly designed to wear down the strongest forbearance. He would neither accept favours nor endure slights. He stood upon his dignity, and resented policy. Whatever method of conciliation Sir Hudson might have adopted was foredoomed to failure, because Napoleon, with his eye upon Europe, was determined to win sympathy beyond the limits of St Helena, because he was, in effect, playing to the gallery. Of course he acted well within his right, and none can say that he did not play the game according to the rules. Lowe was his jailer, and it was Napoleon's business to make him feel the discomfort of the position. On the other hand, Lowe also did no more than he should. He was playing a game far more difficult than Napoleon's, since he faced an adversary of genius, and essayed a game that he was predestined to lose. To either side, therefore, we should at this distance of time yield our measure of sympathy. And we believe that Napoleon, at any rate, was too good a sportsman not to justify Sir Hudson's conduct. When the Emperor died the game was played out, and the Emperor had won nearly every trick. Nor was he the man to whine, save in public, at his adversary's method of play; and his last act was to urge his friends to make peace with the governor.

A confusion of argument, then, has prevented Lord Rosebery from doing justice to his countrymen,—has revived in his mind something of the old Jacobin heresy. But, if we except this blindness of hero-worship, we shall find in Lord Rosebery's book much that is interesting and valuable. Above all, he characterises the strange, paltry world of Longwood with much lucidity. Gourgaud, Las Cases, Bertrand—he sums them all up, and we agree with him that the ingenious Boswell, that was Gourgaud, is both trustworthy and entertaining. After all, when discussion is at an end, and when we are tired of assailing or defending Sir Hudson Lowe,

Napoleon's table-talk.

there remains in the literature of St Helena a vast mass of admirable talk. Some may prefer the Napoleon of the suppressed letters, the Emperor whose pen was as a cutting sword, the hero who would have flung the cardinals into cold baths, and who rated all the kings of his own making as an angry master rates his schoolboys. In truth, no man ever wielded the pen of sovereignty with a finer decision. But, highly as we admire these finished exercises in dominant vituperation, we are not sure that we do not prefer the Napoleon of St Helena. The style is no longer the style of action. A quiet spirit of familiar reminiscence silences the voice of command. The reflection of the gossip replaces the authority of the monarch. In the pages of Gourgaud and others, faithfully reproduced by Lord Rosebery, we seem to look upon Napoleon seated at his hearth with his dressing-gown around him. Even his readers are admitted to an intimacy which the Emperor in his might admitted to no man, and, as we should expect, the Emperor says nothing that detracts from our respect.

The intelligence is as vivid as ever, only it is exercised upon fresh topics. The pride is as lofty as of old, but it is a pride in matters more trivial than a throne. "I made Ossian the fashion," he boasts with perfect truth. "The income-tax is a good tax," he says on another occasion, "for every one grumbles at it, which shows that every one pays it." Rare among men by his triumph, Napoleon is also rare among men by an appreciation of his own career. He is one of the few who have been conscious of their own drama. Taking up a year-book of his reign one day, "It was a fine empire," he said; "I ruled eighty-three millions of human beings — more than half the population of Europe." And again he murmurs, "After all, what a romance my life has been!" It had, indeed; but most, even of the mighty, have taken their life for granted.

At St Helena, however, he thought of other things than of his own career. Now and again he discusses his generals, or declares in an admirable epigram that "Talleyrand is sure to die in his bed." But theology had a constant interest for him, and he never tired of reading the Bible to his companions. Moses he found an "able man," and once he proposed to write his campaigns. In matters of controversy he was by no means orthodox. He objected to Christianity, he said, because it is not sufficiently ancient; and then inconsequently declared himself a Mohammedan. Another day he is a stern materialist. "Say what you like," he argues, with a foretaste of Darwinism, "everything is matter, more or less organised. When out hunting I had the deer cut open, and saw that their interior was the same as that of a man. A man is only a more perfect being than a dog or a tree, and living better. The plant is the first link in a chain of which man is the last. I know that this is all contrary to religion, but it is my opinion that we are all matter." It is contrary to religion; but we should not expect orthodoxy from the man who kidnapped a pope, and who insulted the whole college of cardinals. Yet he is not always dogmatic; and another day he confesses that "there is so much that one does not know, that one cannot explain." Scepticism, indeed, is his frequent attitude, from which no discussion with Gourgaud or Bertrand can shift him.

The Emperor's theology.

His judgment of the English is generally favourable. He holds us good soldiers and bad diplomatists. Above all, he praises our loyalty. "Had I been in 1815," he says with justice, "the choice of the English as I was of the French, I might have lost the battle of Waterloo without losing a vote in the Legislature or a soldier from my ranks. I should have won the game." That is not the opinion of a man tortured into hatred and revolt by unspeakable meanness. But the strangest trait of all

is the frankness wherewith he discusses his family and his wives. He thinks ill of his brothers, and he doesn't think he ever loved anybody, which is probably true. On the other hand, he hated much, and most of all he hated the people, as well he might, having witnessed the Revolution. That early impression was ineffaceable, and though for the moment he adopted the cant of the time, the democracy was always loathsome to him. Maybe nothing less than the Revolution could have opened the doors of France to his genius; but it was his genius which alone could have crushed the fury of the mob. For himself, he regretted his solitary, quiet death. It spoiled the scenic effect of his life, and no man was ever more careful of scenic effect than he. "To die at Borodino," he said, "would have been to die like Alexander: to be killed at Waterloo would have been a good death: perhaps Dresden would have been better: but no better at Waterloo. The love of the people, their regret." He died almost alone, surrounded by a few of the mediocrities, whom, as Stendhal says, he always loved. But it was as *l'Empereur* that his body entered the Invalides, and it is as *l'Empereur* that he will live with the life of the world.

JANUARY.

NONE but kings and egoists are fit to indite the record of their lives. The king knows himself to be the pivot of his world, and what to the king is knowledge is to the egoist a confident belief. Pride, then, personal and overweening, is essential to the perfect autobiography; and if the pride be simple enough, we may perhaps dispense with the other great quality—self-knowledge. For though it obscure reality, pride can create a phantom at once imposing and consistent. "Nequidquam sapit qui sibi non sapit," wrote Cicero, and with this bold motto Casanova prefaced the story of his life. It fitted his book as loosely as it fitted the performances of Cicero; but though Casanova knew not himself, he knew very clearly what his ambition would have made him, and at any rate he drew us the portrait of a hero. We do not believe that all the brilliant adventures of his narration were his own; now and again, we are sure, he fell below his lofty standard; yet we know that if there exist a perfect Casanova in the world of ideas, he is none other than the fanciful, intrepid, ridiculous creature imagined by himself.

Auto-biography.

The autobiographer, then, must either possess a clear knowledge, or see a clear image, of himself, and it must be admitted that the image is rarer than the knowledge. Only the very greatest attain to the simple consciousness of self, which changes a mass of detail to an immortal portrait. Pepys and Montaigne attained to it, each after his guise. The daily habits of the Admiralty clerk are as familiar to us as

Pepys and Montaigne.

the daily thoughts of the French essayist. We know the one as well as though we had walked down to Whitehall with him, or taken a barge in his company to meet John Evelyn in the City; we know the other as intimately as though we had sat in his famous tower, discussing Plutarch's historic sense or the 'Metamorphoses' of Ovid. Their gift of self-revelation was equal, yet differently acquired. Candour was to Samuel Pepys a natural inheritance; he could neither lie to others nor deceive himself; and he is the one man, known to history, who is superior to the illusion of vanity or fear. He was conscious, yet not self-conscious—that is to say, he knew all the secrets of his own temperament, but he did not confess even to himself that he knew them. He knew the truth because he was gifted with a perfect insight; he told the truth, withholding nothing, exaggerating nothing, because falsehood never came to him. Montaigne, on the other hand, not only drew his own portrait, but criticised the performance. While Pepys was an egoist in his own despite, Montaigne exulted in his own egoism. He had but one cult—the cult of self; his ambition was *de scavoir estre a soy.* And so for twenty years he conversed with the world, and gave to the first-comer the full confidence of his brain. That his readers may be on closer terms with their interlocutor, he describes his mean stature, his square frame, his face—full, not fat. He confesses his slowness of speech, his deafness to the art of music. And then he reveals his opinions with an ungrudging candour, until we know him, critic, politician, and humourist, as we know few other men. Of the outside world he tells us nothing; his vision was bounded by the circumference of his tower. But he looked within, and discovered in heart and brain the secrets of human emotion. Here, too, he is the antithesis of Pepys, who went early abroad, and who found the proper field of his energy in street, tavern, or theatre.

Pepys and Montaigne knew themselves, and have shared their knowledge with a multitude of readers. But even more entertaining are the autobiographies of those who have pictured themselves not as they were, but as they wished to be. Their pose is infinite in variety; but it is pose always, and always delightful. Now in a spirit of boastfulness they represent themselves thieves and assassins; now they prove themselves too ardent lovers of "the fair." Yet seldom do they lay claim to virtues which are not theirs, for that would be hypocrisy, and hypocrisy is a sin abhorrent to the artistic conscience. Cellini and Colley Cibber, for instance, are famous rufflers in their own esteem, but ever behind the mask of rascality we see lurking the smile of high enterprise and satisfied endeavour. They are sincere rather in their ideal than in their narrative; but their braggart humour is as true to life (if not to their life) as the gentle pathos of Don Quixote or the serene courage of Robinson Crusoe, and if their books are not masterpieces of truthful biography, they are excellent specimens of strenuous open-air romance.

The Amir of Afghanistan.

Midway between real and ideal stands Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan, whose Life (London: John Murray) is our last published autobiography. In this work it is the king who is revealed rather than the man, the conqueror rather than the egoist. Yet now and again, in his own despite, he proves the strength or weakness of his own character. To the severity which in the West we call cruelty he often pleads guilty. Now he is found flogging negligent servants; now he blows bandits from his guns; at one time he kills with his own hand an "impure-minded dog," who dares to call him an infidel; at another he plucks the beard from a rascal who brings him an unwelcome message. "Without further conversation," says he of the messenger, "I ordered my servants to pull out his beard and moustache, and to

dye his eyebrows like a woman. I then took him to the place where the remains of the merchants lay, and put his beard and moustache in a gold cloth, advising him to take it to his Mir, both as a caution and as a reply to his letter. With this man I sent a strong force, consisting of two battalions, 2000 cavalry sowars, 1000 Usbeg sowars, 2000 infantry, and twelve guns, to Talikan. When they arrived there, the commanders sent this man with his reply to Mir Jahandar Shah, who abused him, and demanded to know why he had returned without the prisoners whom he had sent him to fetch. The man uncovered his face, and threw the gold cloth at the Mir's feet, saying: 'This is what I have suffered by carrying your idiotic messages, and this is what you will suffer if you are not careful.'" In that episode is the savage imagery of the East, and it proves that if the Amir is always a king, he is also in his hours a stern, fierce-hearted savage.

For him it is a disaster that he challenges comparison with Babar, a predecessor who was not merely a tyrant but a man of letters. Now Babar, proud as he is of his own bravery, does not spare his manhood. He was as easily conscious of his weakness as of his strength. Not even his vices were hid from his kingly eye, and he freely confesses that he was constantly guilty of drunkenness—the one unpardonable sin. Yet in his eyes, the smallest excuse justified a glass. He cut his hair, or saw a beautiful view, or the crops were good, or he sat by Kábil's tomb, or a tribute arrived—whatever it was, it was sufficient for the wine-cup; and when he wearied of wine there was *bhang* to bring forgetfulness. So it comes about that Babar is always alive, always a man, fierce with pleasure or with combat, always a hero who does not count too closely the cost of his heroism. Abdur Rahman, on the other hand, is serious and sedate. No sooner did he leave the cradle than his hand felt round for the crown. Never for an instant does he

forget the dignity and honour which are hedged about the throne, and though every page proves him an Oriental, very few pages separate him from the other sovereigns of his race. So he will probably go down to posterity as an exemplary monarch, a fine soldier, and such a husband and father as would do credit to the suburb of a Western capital. Yet we believe that there is still an Abdur Rahman who forgets more often than once a-year the cares of State, and who, if he understood the true use of literature, would prove himself a strenuous rival of Babar himself.

"A witty and humorous genius."

Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, who edits the Amir's life, and who whimsically describes himself as an advanced student of Christ's College, Cambridge, assures us that his master is "a witty and humorous genius." That we are quite content to believe. The Amir is witty and humorous; he has a pleasant love of anecdote and parable; and he expresses himself on political affairs with a masterful and enchanting candour. But this candour he does not extend to his own character, and it is merely by an incidental method that we may arrive at the real Amir. True it is that in one chapter he discusses at some length his "daily life," but even here we detect the simple soldier rather than the Eastern monarch. He frankly confesses himself that his life has been a life of toil and abstinence. His habits are as simple as his garb. He is so industrious a soldier that he can not only command in the field, he can cast his own guns and make his own shells. Before all things he loves work; he can live with little sleep, and he is not a slave to pretentious banqueting. His career has been shaped by one ambition — to complete the administrative work of his kingdom. The result has been a constant gratification. "If the beloved should not encourage the lover towards her," he quotes from the poet, "the lover will neither have the heart nor the

courage to approach her." But the beloved, in more prosaic terms the administration of Afghanistan, has encouraged the lover, and the Amir is perfectly satisfied with the result of his approach.

Like the faithful Eastern that he is, he gives the honour where it is due. "This love of work," he writes, "is inspired by God; it is the true ideal and desire of my life to look after the flock of human beings whom God has intrusted to me, His humble slave. . . . As God wished to relieve Afghanistan from foreign aggression and internal disturbance, He honoured this, His humble servant, by placing him in this responsible position, and He caused him to become absorbed in thoughts of the welfare of the nation, and inspired him to be devoted to the progress of this people, and to be ready to sacrifice life itself for their welfare and for the true faith of the Holy Prophet Mahomed." So it is that Abdur Rahman is ever visited by dreams of progress, and here at least he matches Babar, his matchless predecessor, who first attacked India with the artillery of Europe. The curious may note that in consequence of his ambition he knows no stated time for eating or sleeping. He is so deeply absorbed in affairs that he often does not notice the night until it is past. His story, in fact, is "like the story of a lover, well known in the East, named Majnum, who was so much in love with a lady named Leila, that, one day, seeing her dog, he followed the dog, and did not see the mosque nor those who were praying therein." But though he did not see the mosque the chiefs of the mosque saw him; whence it is evident that their devotion was not so deep as his.

A sleepless administrator.

Abdur Rahman, however, sleeps when he is tired, and eats when he is famished. He gets through ten times as much work as the busiest of his subjects, and yet finds a moment to watch the prowess of his chess-players, to listen to the voice of his reader, or to fall

asleep at the droning of the story-teller—that true wizard of the East. Being the real father of his people, he will see the meanest petitioner, and answer the humblest appeal; and he records with a grim humour the superstition of Afghanistan, that every man possesses his signature, and that there is a detective in every house. But in nothing does he prove himself the true Oriental more clearly than in his love of nature. His rooms, he tells us, "are so arranged that the spring blossoms may be watched as they break from the trees, and the gorgeous yellow hues of the autumn, and the dazzling falls of the winter snow, and the moonlight nights, are enjoyed by all the inmates of my palace who take the trouble to sit at these windows. I spend my summer, spring, and autumn outside the town, living for weeks in tents pitched in those positions where all the beautiful blossoms can be seen, glowing sunsets, and the yellow autumn tints. I have always loved beautiful scenery, flowers, green grass, music, pictures." And in this love Abdur Rahman shows himself the fit successor of Babar, who above all things prized the garden at Kabul, where he lies buried, and which is still fragrant with the scent of roses, and resonant to the music of running water.

The character of Abdur Rahman.

Thus it is that now and again we catch a glimpse of the king who governs the inaccessible country lying between Russia and our Indian empire. He is, as we have said, a resolute soldier, a clear-sighted politician, who prides himself upon the security of his roads and the well-ordered administration of his justice. So long has he lived and conferred with Europeans, that his true nature is too often disguised. When he tells us that of the robbers who infest Afghanistan "one now hangs in a cage, where I put him, on the peak of the Latabund mountain," we are reminded of Tamerlane, and we momentarily doubt the word of Abdur Rahman. But that man still hangs

in his cage, and, for all his civilisation, the Amir inherits the kingdom of the 'Arabian Nights.' The very names, which he uses with so easy a freedom, are quick with romance — Rustum and Sohrab, Bokhara and Samarkand. The camels, laden with gold and spice, wind over the hills; the king tarries at the ford of the Oxus, watching those who chaffer in almonds and raisins; or he walks into the bazaar, exchanging with the first comer such proverbs and anecdotes as were told at the tent-door in immemorial antiquity.

Eastern in thought, Abdur Rahman is also Eastern in his career. At the age when the princes of the West are playing cricket, he was the military governor of a province. Nor did he even then take a trivial view of his responsibilities. He must be independent, or he would not rule; and when his father insisted on the collection of a tribute which his youthful generosity had remitted, he "resigned the governorship, stating that he was not invested with full power to govern according to his ideas." But other employment was found him, and since the age of thirteen he has never known the misery of idleness, save in prison or exile. Eastern, too, are the strong contrasts of his life. Babar was eleven when he took his first town; Abdur Rahman was no more than nine when he witnessed the siege of Shibarghan. Babar in the intervals which separated one victory from another dwelt with shepherds in the wilderness; the reigning Amir has known the humility of cold and hunger, nor is the omnipotence of to-day rendered less sweet by the memory of yesterday's privation.

The autobiography of action.

The greater part of his autobiography, then, is a record of achievement. The pages bristle with action, and in every chapter the blare of the trumpet is heard. From one point of view the action spoils the interest of the book. All men say and do the same things in the face of danger, and it is rare that we catch a glimpse of personal char-

acter amid the dust of the battlefield. The truth is that men are distinguished one from another rather by weakness than by strength, and Abdur Rahman reveals himself rather by the way than in the direct recital of his prowess. None the less, his frank confession of skill and courage is pleasant enough, and though we need not believe in the literal truth of his achievements, we know him to be a very brave man, and the most intrepid of generals. When at sixteen he received from his father's hand "the horse with gold-harness and saddle, and the jewelled belt and sword," which befitted a commander-in-chief, he had already mastered the art of war, and had put behind him all hesitancy. He had not long been in command when he turned from his uncle. "Although he was my uncle," he writes, "and far older than I, being proved a coward, I turned my face from him, and would not say anything but that he was a disgrace to his celebrated father, Dost Mahomed." His enthusiasm for the army has never changed. "The appearance of 40,000 men on a desert plain," thought he many years ago, "is like the movement of a mountain;" and to-day, despite his zeal for administration, his horse is always saddled, his sword and pistols always at his side.

Nor, save in his long contest with Shere Ali, has he often known defeat. Superior numbers have had no terror for him, and with two hundred men he has attacked an army of thousands. When he lost the battle to his uncle, it was through the negligence of a general, who got drunk in the face of the enemy, and could only murmur, "I will tear Shere Ali's mouth." Abdur Rahman laughed through his despair; but flight was imperative, and he arrived at Zurmat "tired, ruined, and broken-hearted." So complete was his rout, that this wealthy prince had no more wealth than a travelling tinker. A few days before he had been the richest man in Afghanistan. He had possessed 800,000 gold coins of

Bokhara, 20,000 English sovereigns, 20,000 drams of gold, eleven lakhs of rupees, Kabuli, five lakhs of rupees, Kanduz, 10,000 khilats, cooking utensils for 2000 people (the number that used to eat with him every day), and 1000 camels. Now naught was left, save one copper cup, one jug, one hubble-bubble, and one small rug either to wear or to stand upon. Yet Abdur Rahman accepted defeat with the resignation imposed by his faith; he spent his years of exile in Samarkand with what state he might command; when warfare was denied him, he made the best of sport; and he knew that the day of his return would most surely come.

The rest of his life belongs rather to the world than to himself. It is history, not autobiography; and interesting as it is for politicians to know that the Amir is Great Britain's staunchest ally, Abdur Rahman's able discussion of his neighbours and their claims throws no light on his own character. Yet he has written a most interesting book; he has drawn the portrait of a simple, industrious, liberal, splendour-loving monarch, who, like all great rulers, has the genius of detail; he has shown us a society which recalls the nomad hordes of the Old Testament; and he has decked his adventures in the coloured trappings of the 'Arabian Nights.' If we do not know the real Abdur Rahman as we know the real Babar, that is because Abdur Rahman is not a man of letters like his predecessor. "I was never fond of reading and writing," says he, and truly a sword is readier to his hand than a pen.

The autobiography of thought.

A more striking contrast to the Life of the Amir could not be found in the whole realm of literature than Gibbon's 'Memoirs of my Life and Writings.' Abdur Rahman's work is the autobiography of action, Gibbon's is the autobiography of thought. The author of the 'Decline and Fall' made few incursions into the field of affairs, and

the few that he made were incidental to the main purpose of his life. Patriotism drove him into the militia; but he was seldom at his ease with soldiers, and of his sad experience no more can be said than that "the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers was not useless to the historian of the Roman Empire." He entered Parliament, but with no ambition of becoming a statesman, or even a debater. His outlook was limited, as he told Deyverdun, to a convenient and honourable place upon the Board of Trade. In brief, he was a man of letters pure and simple. He confessed, when he sat down to write his incomparable 'Memoirs,' that the "review of his moral and literary character was the most interesting to himself and to the public." Wherefore he sketched his moral and literary character with an amplitude and candour which few have excelled. His narrative is enlivened with no stirring episodes. An immature and transient conversion to the Roman Catholic faith is (so to say) the high light upon his portrait. It is not what he did that interests us, but what he thought, and so keen was his memory that he bids us note the progress of his intellect from rawness to maturity.

His autobiography, therefore, is the autobiography of the student and critic. He looked at life through the medium of books, because it was in books that he sought and found the sincerest passages of his life. Above all, he was staunchly devoted to his craft: he sang the praise of humane letters with an eloquence for which we are still grateful. Though he took an open pride in the birth and station of a "gentleman," he set his literary achievement far above his pride, and he confesses that his history gave him a position in the world to which neither birth nor politics nor the militia might bid him aspire. But better still, at the outset of his 'Memoirs' he compares the talent of letters with all the other distinctions of life in a passage of unrivalled

arrogance. "The nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched" — thus he writes — "by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the 'Fairy Queen' as the most precious jewel of their coronet. Our immortal Fielding was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who draw their origin from the Counts of Habsburgh, the lineal descendants of Ethico, in the seventh century, Duke of Alsace. Far different have been the fortunes of the English and German divisions of the family of Habsburgh: the former, the knights and sheriffs of Leicestershire, have risen slowly to the dignity of a peerage; the latter, the Emperors of Germany and Kings of Spain, have threatened the liberty of the old and invaded the treasure of the new world. The successors of Charles the Fifth may disdain their brethren of England; but the romance of 'Tom Jones,' that exquisite picture of English manners, will outlive the palace of the Escurial and the imperial eagle of the house of Austria." Literature does not contain a prouder boast than that, and if literature made Gibbon famous, he repaid the favour with a splendid loyalty.

The search for truth.

In writing his life, as in writing his history, he sought only truth. "Truth, naked, unblushing truth, the first virtue of more serious history, must be the sole recommendation of this personal narrative." And so keen is Gibbon's love of truth that he spares neither himself nor his friends. If the Amir has told us what he has done, Gibbon tells us what he was. It is not romantic to refuse the hand of the woman you love, and Gibbon might have been the father of Madame de Staël, if the bull be excused. In other words, he loved Mdlle. Curchod, and he had reason to believe that his love was returned. But his father would not hear of this strange alliance; so what could he do but "sigh as a lover and obey as a son"? That he was happier in the mood of single selfishness is un-

doubted; yet he does not shrink from a confession which some might think ignoble, and this candour is characteristic of all his work. Characteristic also is his style, of which he was acutely conscious. "The style," said he, "shall be simple and familiar; but style is the image of character, and the habit of correct writing may produce, without labour or design, the appearance of art and study." That is perfectly true: Gibbon's style was the image of his character; and though it be as simple and familiar as he could make it, it is none the less studied and artful from beginning to end. For Gibbon's pose was so intimately a part of himself that it became natural. Accustomed to wear a wig, he could not appear with a bald head; and if this most intimate autobiography never reveals Gibbon in dressing-gown and slippers, it is because Gibbon was as punctilious even in the solitude of self as was Louis XIV. Thus we are permitted to look at him through his own glasses—to watch him leave Eutropius for Livy, and desert the page of Cornelius Nepos for the ampler periods of Tacitus. By the way he sketches his father, his aunt, his friends, with the same precision wherewith he sets before us Julian or Elagabalus. But the real purpose of his 'Memoirs' is to illustrate his work. The books which he reads are to him more important than the men whom he meets. Abdur Rahman's career turns upon a hostile encounter with Shere Ali. For Gibbon it is essential to record that "from the 'Provincial Letters' of Pascal I learned to manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony, even on subjects of ecclesiastical solemnity." Truly, if the great Pascal had done nothing else than teach our supreme ironist the management of his weapon, he would not have lived in vain. So Gibbon takes us into his workshop and shows us how he collected his material, and how he fashioned it into the serene masterpiece which we admire. So he reveals

The confidences of Gibbon.

himself still in doubt as to the subject he shall select, until one famous evening he "sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted fryars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter." So he invites us to be present on the night of the 27th of June 1787, when between the hours of eleven and twelve he wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in his garden. "After laying down my pen," says he, "I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatever might be the future fate of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious." To few men has it been given to pen so proud a passage; few men have known Gibbon's triumphant happiness. And something of this happiness, and very much of the incomparable talent which fashioned it, shines forth in the autobiography, which has given to the historian the immortality which the history will always enjoy.

FEBRUARY.

The return of Lord Roberts.

To all such as are interested in the demeanour of the crowd, the triumphal return of Lord Roberts to London must have seemed a bewildering spectacle. The experience of the past year might have persuaded us that the British mob was uncontrollable. Our foreign critics especially—they are many and malicious—censured the riotous joy which the people so riotously expressed when the Imperial Volunteers came marching back to their native city. And the censure was in a measure deserved. Only they let their satisfaction get the better of them—these foreign critics. After their invariable fashion, they hastily skipped from the particular to the general. "Look at the base English," they shouted, "who, not content with sending out their soldiers soddened with gin, can devise no better welcome for their favourites than a drunken orgie!" So the wish being father to the thought, they fasten together a dozen links in the chain of argument. England is losing her restraint, said they, and since she has lived for centuries upon the reputation of an estimable coldness, she is rushing headlong to ruin. But the arrival of Lord Roberts not only gave the lie to our amiable critics, but also solved a difficult problem.

When the City Volunteers entered London, they faced a mob of equals and fellow-townsmen. The enthusiasm which they provoked was none too deeply tinged with respect; and the men on the pavement broke the ranks, interrupting the procession, because the "citizen-soldiers"

were (or might have been) their familiar friends. The *fête* was for London an affair of the hearth, and London behaved as she might behave beneath the secrecy of her own roof, when she thought nobody was looking on. But the reception of Lord Roberts was marked by a sober dignity which instantly corrects the foreign generalisation. The enthusiasm of the crowd was tempered by respect; even the cheers were subdued by a grateful and serious admiration. "Here is the great strategist," the crowd seemed to murmur, "who captured Cronje on Majuba Day, who kept his word to Mafeking, and who left the Union-Jack flying over Pretoria." And in his presence the crowd doffed its cap and lowered its voice. There was no trace of the noisy, impertinent familiarity which warmed the hearts of our enemies a few months ago: the crowd dared and did no more than salute in proud humility the veteran who has served the Empire, and repelled the invader from a British Colony.

The philosophy of the crowd.

Throughout the line of march, then, the Field-Marshal was greeted by a mob which neither said nor did anything inconsonant to a great occasion, and when the philosophy of the crowd comes to be written, the philosopher may argue from the experience of the past year that the crowd shouts inversely to the grandeur of its purpose. And the sympathy between the people and its hero was so profound that the hero's pleasure was cordially expressed. Yet he has neither the aspect nor the qualities which inspire a quick popularity. He does not bluster nor make a parade. He is all untouched by the bravado of the *miles gloriosus*. His manner is quiet, for all its alertness, and he returns to London with the simple satisfaction due to a great task greatly accomplished. But perhaps it was within the quadrangle of Buckingham Palace that he received the tribute most proper to his achievement. The few there gathered together raised no cheer, uttered no cry. They merely stood with hats

off in respectful silence, and even though we heard from without the faint echo of a thousand "hurrahs," we realised that they best honour the brave who refrain in his presence from idle acclamation.

And though the impatient grumble that the last shot has not yet been fired in Africa, though Lord Roberts prefers to postpone the City's demonstration until "happier times," the Empire may congratulate itself without vanity or afterthought. The past year has not only been witness of a campaign whose unparelleled difficulties of transport and progression have been successfully overcome; it has also seen the peaceful accomplishment of Australian Federation. To those critics who pray for England's ruin, the foundation of a new empire across the seas may appear a trivial incident. But our history records no event of greater import, and if only a consistent policy be pursued, we need never deplore our splendid isolation. Of what use is a Continental alliance to a State which has the support of vaster colonies than ever gave an allegiance to Rome? Nor are our colonies merely vast in wealth and extent,—they are bound to us by the chains of loyalty which they themselves have forged. Free to come or go, they prefer to remain under the flag; masters of their own hearths, they are still proud of the mother-State which sent them forth. Never again shall we repeat the blunder of George III. and Lord North; never again shall we attempt to shackle a free and liberally governed colony with the chains of pedantry. But we shall rejoice in the friendship of Canada and Australasia, because it is established on the sure foundation of blood and language. Moreover, sentiment and interest are for once united, and our colonies will reciprocate the aid which we give them, because in seeking our advantage they find their own. Nor is the help which Canada and Australasia have rendered us in South Africa the expression of a vague friendship. It is a clear

The Federation of Australia.

proof, given by democratic colonists, that Australians and Canadians hate the corrupt oligarchy of Kruger as bitterly as they resent the mean rebellion of the Cape Dutch. No better instance of imperial solidarity could be found than the demeanour of the Australians, who kept the rebels in check at the Worcester Conference. So anxious were they to show their sympathy with England, to demonstrate their dislike of sedition, that their commanding officer (it is said) had the utmost difficulty in controlling their temper. At the slightest warning, their Maxims would have been turned upon the conference of revolt, and we should have witnessed the spectacle of free and democratic colonists firing upon insurgent colleagues in the name of the mother country.

Wherefore we have every reason to be proud of our colonies, and to look with a contented curiosity to the achievement of Australia's federal Parliament. One of the richest countries in the world owes us a willing allegiance, and during the last year the bonds have been solidly strengthened. In other words, the branches are growing out from the parent stem as they list; but there is no talk of lopping them off, and the old trunk can still bear the burden of shade and leafage imposed upon it. But the croakers are never satisfied, and, despite our good fortune, complaints are heard at every corner. England is in decay, we are told. Her trains are slower than anybody else's; her trade is gone; she cannot compete with the newer markets of the world; she is ceasing to bear sons, and her population before long will decrease as rapidly as the population of France. And lastly, says a monger of statistics, even her death-rate is low! Think of that final tragedy, and tremble! Englishmen are born with difficulty, and once they come into the world they cannot get out of it with a proper despatch. Now, what is the meaning of these figures and prophecies we do not know. They are chiefly concocted in order

England in decay.

that the citizen, used to a daily sensation, may tremble at his breakfast-table, and may amuse himself in the train or omnibus which hustles him to the city, by propounding remedies for imagined evils. It is, no doubt, a pleasant game to play; but in the end it will prove more dangerous than football. If we are falling behind in the race, it were well to recognise it, and provide remedies. But it is not the purpose of the morning papers to improve the country. All these "organs" are concerned to contrive is a hasty misinformed panic, and we believe that a panic-stricken populace is a greater danger to a State than a declining trade. To revive a trade is not impossible; it is far more difficult to bring back to reason a crazy mob that has lost its head.

Hysterical remedies.

Nor are our halfpenny wiseacres at a loss for a remedy. A dozen fresh ones are suggested every day, until we begin to fear an attack of hysteria. Not long since the French nation woke up to believe in what it termed the Anglo-Saxon superiority, and M. Démolins, among others, asked excitedly whence the superiority was derived. A hasty journey to England convinced him at once. England was superior to France, because two wholly obscure schools were hidden away somewhere in the country. He did not remember, this excellent Frenchman, that England had held her own for some centuries, that many of her great men had been educated at such places as Eton, where the methods of Mr Squeers ("w i n, win, d e r, der—winder,—now go and clean 'em") are not followed. No; the Frenchman pitched on a piece of folly which his own countrymen know not, and said cheerfully that he had discovered the secret of Anglo-Saxon superiority. So it is that our critics are seeking to explain the defeat they suppose inflicted upon England by Franco-German ingenuity. And one gentleman is quite sure that all our woes are due to the neglect of modern languages. Wherefore he has taken up his pen and written to the 'Times'—in-

spired, of course, by Lord Rosebery, who is haunted by more bogeys than any living statesman.

The study of modern languages.

Now, Lord Rosebery, having already seen in his mind's eye a French invasion of England, suddenly discovered at Glasgow that our ignorance of French and German is "a source of real danger to the nation." Well, if that be so, by all means let as many as are destined for the pursuit of commerce learn the magic tongues which are to save the country. The acquisition of modern languages is not impossible; and though their importance may be overrated, though England is not yet perishing for lack of them, there is no reason why those who have the chance of improving their value should neglect it. But there is no reason for panic. Ollendorf never yet turned the current of the world's history, and the fervent gentlemen who rushed hurriedly into print might first of all have fortified their case (if any) by a modest inquiry. To begin with, English boys have already as sound an opportunity of learning foreign languages as the French and Germans, who are supposed by Lord Rosebery to be our daily threat. Every boy who goes to a public school is compelled to smatter his brain with French; and if he elect to go upon the modern side, he may add to his attainment a few scraps of German. In this respect he is as fortunate as the youngsters of Paris or Berlin. We have never known a Frenchman—and we have known many—who had picked up as much English at school as would enable him to purchase a packet of cigarettes; and the Germans, whose omnipotence seems to make all Europe shudder, are sensible enough to learn their English in London. Moreover, as the English tongue still dominates commerce, we have less cause than the others to travel beyond the bounds of our own speech; and we cannot approve the energy of those who would find in French and German a panacea for our imagined woes.

In the first place, modern languages must be studied *in situ*. Their acquisition is a matter not of the intelligence but of the ear. Put a boy down in France, force him to ask for what he wants, let him accustom himself all day long to the sound of French words, and he will speak the language as he speaks his own, expressively perhaps, correctly maybe, but without any relation to its grammatical structure. Of all the Englishmen we have ever heard speak French, by far the most accomplished was a native of Bethnal Green, who probably could not read or write a page of intelligible English. But he was gifted with a true ear and a quick instinct, so that he had but to wander up and down the street to learn the language, a knowledge of which, Lord Rosebery says, is to save us from a national peril. Is he one of our saviours, then, or should we give him a place below the professor of medieval philology who knows the history and structure of all the Romance languages, and yet cannot converse with fluency in any tongue save his own? Conversation is well enough, but we imagine that in order to avert the national danger conversation must express something more than the faculty of speech. The mind that can acquire foreign languages is obviously none of the finest; yet if the correspondents of the 'Times' are to be believed, the porter of a foreign hotel is superior in worth to Charles Dickens (let us say) or Benjamin Disraeli.

For the learning of foreign languages, then, two things are necessary—a correct ear and a sojourn abroad. Now, the boy whose ear is dull to sound might as well stay at home; and what parents are they who deem that a knowledge of French or German is sufficient atonement for a foreign education? But, say the enthusiasts, a boy may stay at home and yet learn to talk French, if the proper system be followed. We doubt it: the experiment has had a fair trial and failed; and though every boy may learn a few words at school, we believe

that a proper knowledge of foreign languages must be left to private enterprise. However, there are many who still insist upon "corporate efforts." They appeal to county councils, chambers of commerce, trade-guilds, and finally to our universities. Of course, if such bodies as the chambers of commerce believe the project to be practical, by all means let them do their utmost. They know the solid value of French and German far better than the amateurs, who air their fads in the newspaper; and maybe an interchange of clerks between the countries might be successful. But we must jealously guard our universities against the encroachment of new and useful studies. In the first place, it is not the business of our universities to avert national perils. It is not their business to help the commercial gentleman to fill his pocket. They stand high above the practical pursuits of buying and selling and money-getting. "The universities should not delay any longer," says an enthusiast, "to take their full share in this necessary reform. It is to them we look for guidance and encouragement." The enthusiasts will look, we trust, in vain. The universities exist to pursue knowledge for its own sake, or to provide such training to mind and intelligence as will allow their *alumni* to learn whatever is serviceable to their after-career. They do not exist to fit their pupils for that hideous performance known as "the struggle for life," and despite chairs of agriculture and mechanics, the universities still do their best work in the domain of pure scholarship.

The purpose of the universities.

But, say the apologists of modern languages, French and German are as valuable instruments of "culture" as Greek and Latin. That depends upon the meaning given to "culture"; but if that odious word denotes anything better than a facility of tea-table conversation, we cannot agree with the apologists. As we have said, French and German must be acquired by the ear rather

than by the intelligence. The structure of the languages being similar to the structure of our own, the grammar follows the vocabulary without difficulty, and the best linguists are generally those who do not analyse the result which their facility produces. The study of Greek and Latin is valuable, not only for the splendid literature to which it is the key; it is valuable also because it accustoms the brain to understand the essence and not the mere words of a sentence; and the student who has mastered the grammar of the so-called dead languages will find his brain trained to any enterprise. An intelligent boy can learn to read French in a few months, while a brief stay in a foreign land will teach him to speak it. Is the accident of travel comparable as an instrument of culture to the systematic study of so beautiful a language as Greek, or the understanding of so logical a means of expression as Latin?

The attack upon Greek.

But when the apologists of modern languages unmask their batteries, it is quite clear that their attack is directed against Greek and Latin. Here are the steps in their argument: (1) It is a good thing to learn foreign languages; (2) The universities cannot teach them; (3) Therefore let us abolish Greek. The learned gentlemen whose desire it is to tinker our universities do not see the lapses in the argument. They are so profoundly convinced of their own infallibility that they display a blind rage against the poor dead languages. The Modern Language Association, which met recently, was careful to conceal the object of its attack, but its very cunning renders its purpose the more dangerous. A headmaster, in demanding that "one modern language should be included as a compulsory subject in every university matriculation," declared that he expressly sought to avoid re-opening the Greek question. A professor had less scruple; yet even his courage was tempered by a transparent ingenuity. He moved as an amendment "that a modern language

should be substituted for a classical language." He pointed out with justice that every new subject was a severe burden on the student, and if a new subject was imposed some part of the old burden should be removed. "They could avoid offence," he added, "by not specifying Greek; they all knew what was meant." Happily offence is not so easily avoided, and the fact that all know what is meant will, let us hope, put some at least on their guard.

This attack upon Greek is but a part of the democratisation of our universities, and as such should be repelled with energy. The universities, says the practical man, can only justify their existence on the ground of utility. The merchant who sends his son to Oxford or Cambridge complains, when the boy comes home, that he is useless in the counting-house, and instead of blaming himself for his own folly, he declares that the university has not given him his money's worth. With as much justice he might grumble that Sandhurst was not a proper avenue for the Church, or that barristers did not come forth from Cooper's Hill fully equipped. And the dissatisfied merchant forgets this other truth, that the universities do not seek to please their clients; on the contrary, they are the councils which make the laws of education and exact obedience to those laws. The greedy parent combines with the anxious reformer to demand that our universities should instruct the young in French and book-keeping. The universities can only make one reply to the greedy parent: Send your son elsewhere, and leave us to do our duty in peace.

The universities useless.

For the highest quality of our universities should be their uselessness. They should guard the privilege of impracticability with reverence. The lamp which has been handed to them from the past, which they will hand presently to a younger generation, burns most brightly when it is least diffused. Even if their *alumni* go forth

to the world with their market value decreased, that fact throws no discredit on their teaching. Our colleges have most ably discharged their duty if they have given their pupils a brief insight into the humanities, and have so trained their brains that they may use them intelligently in the enterprises of life. For this purpose the so-called dead languages, with mathematics, are the best instruments possible. The making of scholars is a worthy task which should need no defence. And as for the average boy, who for some reason or other is the pampered favourite of the reformers—he is none the worse if, for once in his life, he is perforce confronted with the most splendid language, the most delicate literature, to which human ears have ever listened. Now, it is obvious that all the boys who go up to our universities cannot grow into scholars. The potter finds broken bits of clay among his pots. And we have known many Englishmen who devoted years to the learning of French, and came away from the task with the fine and free accent of Stratford. For the making of one success, indeed, many failures may be necessary, though to fail in the classics is an inestimable privilege; and even Porson and Bentley owed something to the system which it is proposed to abolish. Therefore every encroachment of French and German is a direct attack upon scholarship.

The truth is, that if once the modern languages get foothold in our universities, Greek and Latin will be in danger. We have seen enough of reformers, especially of university reformers, to doubt their good faith. To-day they ask that French shall be part of the Little-Go. To-morrow they will explain that their favourite study, if study it may be called, is discouraged, and they will fiercely demand that the highest honours in the university be granted to modern languages. Then we shall have triposes (they are there already) in which marks shall be given, not for sound learning and elegant

scholarship, but for facile declamation and the hasty expression of false taste. Papers will be set in Dumas fils, and Heine's influence upon European thought will be discussed by students ill prepared to take a general survey. Even our best scholars may travel along the line of least resistance, and find the easy method of obtaining honours the better suited to their indolence.

Undergraduate or garçon de café.

But, say the champions of French, the average undergraduate learns no Greek and little Latin. Why, then, keep up the farce? Why, indeed? If the average undergraduate be so stupid that the Greek grammar appals him, let him travel from place to place, and give himself the training appropriate to a *garçon de café.* Let him not use his brain at all; let him be content to patter a foreign tongue, as a parrot learns to swear, by listening to the patter of others. Such a man has as little need of a university as a university has of him. But we do not despair of the average undergraduate as we know him. He may not be profoundly learned; he need not have the keenest appreciation of letters. But under the present system he is efficiently drilled, and at any rate he touches the hem of learning's garment. If he but read one play of Sophocles, if he but scamper through half the 'Æneid,' he may have gained an insight into literature which no modern language could give him; and if he forgets the words, and even the characters, of Greek, which to the democrat are so blatant an offence, he has wandered a year or two in the groves of learning.

An apology for the classics.

At present Greek only is in danger, but if Greek be sacrificed, what hope is there for Latin? "Tunc tua res agitur, paries quum proximus ardet," wrote Dr Mayor, the witty professor of Latin, when the study of Greek was wantonly attacked. We do not trust the honesty of those who would sacrifice Greek, and yet hold Latin the foundation

of all learning. Wherein is Latin more valuable than Greek? Is it because the chemist and druggist reads his prescriptions in dog-Latin, or because the man of science has invented a hideous jargon, which bears a false resemblance to the language which Tacitus wrote? Surely these reasons are insufficient even for the British parent, who wants to see an instant return of 10 per cent on the money spent upon his son's education. And if one or other of the ancient languages must go, we would throw Latin overboard with less regret. For Greek, the more beautiful tongue, expresses the more beautiful thoughts. If the understanding of literature and history bear any part in the study of language, then Greek should be strong enough to resist all attacks. For among the Greeks literature first became a fine art. There is no prose, no poetry, that was not invented by the most marvellous people that ever struck a lyre, or went forth to battle in the panoply of youth. Homer devised and perfected the epic; Sophocles made the perfect mould of tragedy and broke it; Aristophanes evoked laughter from the clouds, as the savage king draws rain by his enchantment; Thucydides revealed the true grandeur of history's muse. Whatever the Romans wrote or thought, they wrote or thought in mimicry, and happily the genius of the moderns cannot cut itself adrift from the great tradition. Why, then, to please the apothecary, should Greek be sacrificed to Latin, as it is to be sacrificed to French, to please the commercial traveller? No; Latin and Greek must stand or fall together, and since our universities have nought to do either with bagmen or apothecaries, we may still be of good hope that the ancients will win another victory over the moderns.

Meanwhile the champions of French are more ingenious than fair-minded. Having declared that their hero, the average boy, cannot understand the rudiments of literature, they instantly turn about and declare that

French and German are as fine instruments of culture as Latin or Greek. Their position of course is untenable, and their argument wholly disingenuous. Is Villon a better study for the schoolboy than Virgil? Will the youth who is not fit to read Cæsar and Plato profit his soul by construing the splendid page of Pascal or Rabelais? Will he understand the satire of La Bruyère or the reactionary logic of Joseph de Maistre? Even if he could unravel the secret of these masters, it would do him but little good. For they do not teach the great lesson of simplicity, which taught by the classics is a lifelong, if unconscious, reward. And the youth who is set to study French will speedily desert the academic writers for the blameless amusement of Jules Verne, or the less innocent curiosity of the furtive novel. In conclusion, the acquisition of modern languages is a graceful and may be (as we are told) a very useful accomplishment. But it is not the business of universities to teach them. If they are to be a discipline, they must be taught on a system; and as a well-known examiner in modern languages says, "to teach modern languages as these classical tongues are taught is as foolish as to isolate an infant in a tower to see if his first word will be 'Bekos.'" Our scholars may very well be left to learn French and German in their hours of ease, and as for the commercial gentlemen, they must be encouraged by the County Councils and sent to sojourn abroad. Then and then only will they be able to avert what Lord Rosebery's amiable pessimism describes as a "national danger," a near companion of General Mercier's phantom fleet. But once French and German, under Professor Skeat's wily auspices, are established firmly in Cambridge and Oxford, the so-called dead languages will be threatened by the last death, which shall make them dead indeed.

The champions of French.

MARCH.

Victoria, like Elizabeth, is the sole queen of her name, and history need invent for her no distinguishing adjective. But if history were called upon to choose, its choice would be Great rather than Good. The goodness and virtue of an august lady may be taken for granted. Though their absence be a patent disgrace, their presence is not the best title to honour. And while Victoria was eminent in the simplicities of a well-ordered life, she won the world's admiration by the rarer qualities of will and wisdom. She was not merely good, she was great, and she will be remembered more warmly for what she did than for what she was. When Bismarck described her as the first statesman of Europe, he spoke no more than the truth. Born with the instinct of government, she so wisely improved her natural gifts, she so zealously profited by the intelligence of the many Ministers who served her, that her influence was supreme in the councils of Europe, and her death is a calamity not only to her own country but to the world.

Victoria the Great.

She ascended the throne at an inauspicious moment. Kingship had fallen into a miserable disrepute. The last three monarchs who had sat upon our throne had done little to make their office easy or glorious. George III. had obscured whatever virtues were his by an obstinacy of opinion which lost us a vast colony, and which might well have enslaved us to a foreign Power. George IV. had died unwept and unpitied. As he had made his distinguished

The disrepute of the throne.

office a scandal, as he had made his throne ridiculous by a deplorable levity of taste and conduct, so he had forfeited the affection of his people, and alienated their sympathy long before death overtook him. "There never was an individual," proclaimed the 'Times' but a few weeks after his death, "less regretted by his fellow-creatures than this deceased king. What eye has wept for him? What heart has heaved one throb of unnecessary sorrow?" And the 'Times' expressed in these bitter words nothing less than the popular judgment. Nor can it be said that William IV. graced the throne of Britain. Loved for his homely virtues, he raised a smile of kindly contempt by his lack of dignity, and his frank misunderstanding of kingly ceremonial. On the day of his accession, he escaped from his Council and was found throwing shillings to a noisy crowd in a back street, and never did he acquire the rudiments of tact, which should be the first wisdom of kings. It is not surprising, therefore, that Victoria was confronted at her accession with the most dangerous of tasks. Her house had sacrificed its popularity, her office had lost its distinction. She was young and obscure; she had never known the glamour of popularity which surrounded the Princess Charlotte. Yet immediately William IV. was dead, this girl came forth a determined and independent ruler.

The trade of kingship.

At the outset she showed that she understood her profession. "*C'est mon métier d'être roi*," she might have said with Joseph II. Henceforth, her character and temperament might reveal many a limitation, but she was already a queen, who should restore to our English throne the dignity and honour whereof it had been robbed. For truly kingship is a trade, like another, which demands its own peculiar aptitudes of brain and heart. The divinity which is said to hedge the throne is no more than a cloak of serene self-confidence which guards the sovereign from famili-

arity. But the self-confidence must not exclude sympathy. No king was ever great who did not understand the temper of his people. Charles I. might have been an admirable philosopher or a distinguished prelate; he was not a great king, because he could not appreciate the intelligence of his subjects. Again, a monarch is only great when to a perfect self-reliance he adds a lissomeness of mind which shall help the adaptation of his opinions to varying circumstances. He must, if he be constitutional, bear himself with equal affability to the leaders of opposite parties, and guide their counsels, while appearing to follow them. Such are the rudiments of the trade, which, essayed by many, has been practised successfully by too few, yet on whose successful practice depends the happiness of the world.

Now, it is the rare distinction of Queen Victoria to have possessed (and to have cultivated) these excellent qualities of kingship in a supreme degree. No sooner was her accession announced to her, no sooner had she appeared before Lord Conyngham and the Archbishop of Canterbury, "wrapped in a dressing-gown and with slippers on her naked feet," than she took full possession of herself and of her throne. The wonderful dignity was there already, and the simple, unexpected knowledge of her office. Directly Lord Conyngham had explained the purpose of his errand, and had uttered the words "Your Majesty," she put out her hand to him, that he might kiss it before speaking further. It is a simple action, yet wholly characteristic, and it proves that the girl of seventeen appreciated at once the duties and dignities of her state. From that day her demeanour never varied. When she attended her first Council, Wellington declared that "if she had been his own daughter he could not have desired to see her perform her part better." Nor had she been many months a queen before she gave evidence of a peremptory disposition. Always ready to consult her Ministers, and

to adopt their advice, she would submit to no other influence; and after the death of William IV. not even her mother retained the smallest control over her. Yet this self-reliance did but increase her energy and power of work. She took the keenest interest in all that was done in her realm of England, and no wiser tribute was paid to her after death than the tribute of industry. She was a Queen who worked harder than any of her subjects, and she was busy not in the frivolous pursuit of pleasure, but in the proper administration of her court and country.

So with years her popularity increased, and the Queen who paid her first visit to the House of Parliament in gloomy silence lived to hear on all hands the plaudits of the people. And the cheers of the mob meant something more than a vague adulation. They meant that the tact and temper of Victoria had brought back the office of a sovereign into good repute, nay, more than this, had enormously increased the power and prestige of the Throne. But her popularity was not won by any sacrifice of dignity. Queen Victoria always preserved that attitude of pride which became her state. If we may believe the writers of memoirs, she possessed the power of frightening her Ministers from the very first. "They want to treat me like a girl," she is said to have complained at the crisis of the Bedchamber, "but I will show them that I am Queen of England," and show them she did to such purpose that a word from her dismayed or appeased the boldest statesman. Brougham himself, ever intolerant of restraint, was instantly calmed by half-a-dozen affable words, while her right judgment controlled even the extravagance of Palmerston. So she grew, after years of retirement, into a sort of fetich. Those of her subjects who had never seen her regarded her in thoughtful enthusiasm as a symbol of sovereignty, and she attained, through this universal sympathy, to a loftier position than any

other monarch has known since the beginning of time.

The Queen's statesmanship.

Statesmanship is commonly regarded as a masculine enterprise, yet Victoria was a statesman despite her sex. She knew what she wanted, and with her Ministers' aid she most often achieved it. Her knowledge of affairs was remarkable always, and though she owed much to the early tutelage of Melbourne, the faculty was inborn. Sir James Graham acknowledged that he always spoke to her as to a sensible man, while Palmerston declared that she was more deeply interested in Foreign Affairs than in anything else. There, indeed, lay her peculiar skill. She knew foreign nations as most people know their own family, and she could look through and beyond the quarrels of diplomacy to the essential truth. In the course of her long reign she had many Foreign Ministers, and not all of them were easy of management. Yet when Palmerston interfered too openly with what she deemed her prerogative, she had the courage to dismiss that most powerful of Ministers, and to demolish the policy which approved Napoleon's *coup d'état.* Nor did her private friendships spoil her judgment. For many years she was devoted to the House of Orleans, but after the shameful trickery of the Spanish Marriage her eyes were open, and she wrote such a letter as for clearness and severity has not many rivals in the archives of state. This ability it is that makes Queen Victoria so curious a puzzle. Endowed with an intellect which no discursive critic could call brilliant, she achieved a result which generally evades the most brilliant. But the narrowness of her genius was its strength. Her whole mind was directed upon the conduct of affairs, and the lessons of many years, together with the acquaintance of many great men, gave her a power of discernment and action which has fallen to the lot of very few mortals.

And not only did she understand the policy of her own

country. She became, at the end of her life, an inspiration to the policy of other nations. She has been called "a Mentor of kings," and true it is that by precept and example she taught other monarchs how to rule. As her experience was longer and wider than the experience of her colleagues, so she might claim the authority over the most of them which belongs to the head of a great and distinguished family. The kings of Europe sat at her feet, and learnt of her the wisdom of just government; and the last honours paid to her by all the Crowns of Europe were not the suggestion of courtly ceremonial, but a loyal and frank expression of bounden duty.

A constitutional monarch.

Above all, she practised and inculcated the virtues of constitutional monarchy. She has silenced, and taught others to silence, the raucous voice of revolution. As we have said, she acceded to the throne when the throne was discredited. She lived through a period of unpopularity and disaffection. There was a time when it was considered reputable by a large party in the State to receive the toast of the Queen without rising. For many months both the Queen and her Consort were so stoutly vilified by the press and the people that a royal progress seemed dangerous, and crowds collected on Tower Hill to see Prince Albert led fettered to a dungeon. But by a quiet respect for the constitution Queen Victoria made the noisy clamour of sedition disreputable, and after a long reign left the authority of the Crown more firmly established than ever. In truth, this proper interpretation of constitutional monarchy is not the least of her achievements. She proved again what her predecessors had forgotten, that in our free country the throne is established for the people, not the people for the throne. The throne, in fact, is the best equipoise that could be devised for the conflicting elements which make up our country. Theoretically the constitution

has been understood for centuries; but no constitution can live by theory alone, and it was Queen Victoria's triumph to demonstrate for us and for our neighbours the truth that in wise hands and with just management the ideal constitution can have a practical existence. Who knows but that had Queen Victoria been longer on the throne than she had in 1848, the wave of disorder and revolution which wellnigh overwhelmed Europe might have been stayed?

Divine right.

Kings proceed by the weight of their own position. There is a certain quality in them which of old was called "divine right," but which to-day is more wisely interpreted as popular affection; and this quality lends a force to their lightest actions. Yet Queen Victoria relied upon something stronger than this quality. She was determined that, if the throne respected the constitution, the Government should conciliate and respect the throne. So she took her way with a firm and even persistence, which won when it seemed to yield. In the famous battle of the Bedchamber Peel appeared the victor, but the Queen in truth had her way, and kept it until the end. But with this simple persistency, the birthright of her race, she combined a singular openness of mind. Strong as her opinions might be, they were not closed against revision. In later life she described her own action in the matter of the Bedchamber a piece of foolishness. She was wise enough and strong enough to avoid that obstinacy of the weak which holds that a change of view is no better than moral cowardice. Of course the true cowardice consists in the perseverance of error, and to this the Queen always rose superior. At the outset of her reign she was undoubtedly a Whig at heart. But the Whiggery of Lord Melbourne was not disastrous, and it had nought in common with Radicalism, ancient or modern. Nevertheless, for all her sympathy, she accepted the advice of Peel with fairness and

discretion. She bowed to his view of the Corn Laws despite the opposition of Melbourne, her earlier friend. The two statesmen whom at varying periods she most disliked were Lord Palmerston and Disraeli. Yet no sooner had Palmerston left the Foreign Office than she appreciated his talents with a generous enthusiasm; and all the world knows how Disraeli was at last the best beloved and most warmly trusted of her Ministers. In truth, she possessed not only the courage of her opinions, but the greater courage of changing them, and so she lived through a long reign without losing her influence or ever sinking to intrigue.

Arms and arts.

One reproach has always been cast at her by the ignorant. She was no patron of the arts, we are told. Her taste in pictures was never lofty: she encouraged the portraiture of Winterhalter and other mediocrities, whom, being foreigners, patriotism cannot excuse. Nor does she seem to have approved what was best in our literature, though the greatest of laureates was hers. The reproach is just, but unjustly levelled. She possessed neither Henry VIII.'s talent of discovery, nor the good fortune of Elizabeth to be surrounded by knight-adventurers of the pen. But we have as little right to blame a Queen for her lack of poetry as we should have to blame a poet for his lack of sovereignty. If a monarch be also a dilettante, so much the better for him and for posterity. But a monarch's duty is to rule, and he may not be disparaged on a side-issue. Each one to his trade is a sound motto; and when we look at this realm of Britain, we need regret neither the portraits of Winterhalter nor the verse of Tupper. Victoria was a great Queen, who served her country as wisely and bravely as any of her ancestry, and those arts which need the encouragement of a throne may be left to perish ingloriously.

It is the fashion, moreover, to attack the age, which

dies with the death of the Queen, as an age of vulgarity and Philistinism. Our writers have condemned their contemporaries with a fury which outships justice. A distinguished critic loudly proclaimed the other day that the Victorian age might only boast one great name—Thomas Carlyle; and so violent a pronouncement reminds us that contemporary criticism is always hazardous. But for once we are content to take the hazard, and to prophesy that the Victorian age, great in arms, will appear to our descendants great also in the arts. Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Mr Meredith have kept the English novel within the bounds of its great tradition. Not unworthy sons of Henry Fielding, they have pursued their craft of wit, humour, and observation with fidelity and success. It was only when the Victorian age was coming to an end that fiction tottered into the pit of journalism. For forty years one of our greatest poets held the office of laureate; and Wordsworth—he, too, touches upon an epoch so often despised. In research, whether scientific or historical, there is the same tale to tell. The names of Kelvin, Simpson, and Lister will not be eclipsed by any effulgence of the past; and though we cannot agree with the distinguished critic already quoted in his estimate of Carlyle, no age more successfully than our own has uncovered the forgotten secrets of other centuries. Wherefore, though poetry and prose live and die independently of royal patronage —though genius, artistic or political, comes and goes as it listeth, Queen Victoria had no cause to be ashamed of her age. Mr Henley in his noble threnody imagines "the mighty ghosts" taking "this sister-ghost tenderly into the night." "Think of the ghosts," he writes—

The Victorian Age.

> "Think of the mighty ghosts: soldiers and priests,
> Artists and captains of discovery,
> God's chosen, His adventurers up the heights
> Of thought and deed—how many of them that led

> The forlorn-hopes of the World !—
> Her peers and servants, made the air
> Of her death-chamber glorious ! Think how they thronged
> About her bed, and with what pride
> They took this sister-ghost
> Tenderly into the night !"

A fine conceit, truly ; and few monarchs have passed into the night more augustly accompanied.

The Queen's death.

But, wonderful as our Queen's life has been, more wonderful was her death. The whole world put on mourning in her desolate honour. She had witnessed, during her reign, the growth of the vastest Empire which ever bowed the knee to a single sovereign. The little lady who lived in the big castle had become a legend to millions of men and women who had never seen her. As during the time of her sickness prayers were sent up for her to countless gods, so her death was lamented in a hundred strange tongues. Tears were shed for the White Queen throughout the length and breadth of India. Patient colonists building up fortunes in the backwoods wept for the lady who was the Queen of their kin, the mother of their Empire. Still more wonderful was the respectful obeisance of Europe. When Queen Elizabeth was buried, the French ambassador represented in his sole person the whole world without Great Britain. When Queen Victoria died, all the kingdoms of the world did her reverence. Nor was this universal and unexpected tribute inspired by any sentiment of rivalry or long custom. Louis XIV. lived longer than Victoria. For many years of his reign he assumed such trappings of grandeur as our Queen in all her pride never put on. He was canonised as the Grand Monarch, *le roi soleil*, long before he closed his eyes in death. But his last sickness was the sign not of grief but of desertion. He who had lived in the light of day, coldly magnificent to his courtiers, a noble

spectacle of terror to his subjects, died friendless and alone. His greatness existed in his own demeanour, not in the affection of his friends or rivals, and death surprised him neglected even by Mme. de Maintenon.

The grief of Europe.

How different the death of Queen Victoria! Marked by the simple grandeur which marked her life! Europe, which during the past years has exhausted the vocabulary of spite against her subjects, hastened to pay her the last honours. Her illness was but the sign of renewed respect and increased affection. The German Emperor, with splendid energy, translated into fact what doubtless was in the mind of all kings. He hastened to the bedside of the great monarch who had taught him the earliest lessons of monarchy. Action and thought being simultaneous with him, he hesitated not an instant, and, in expressing his own grief, set a noble example to others. Nor was this universal grief inspired by the private virtues of our Queen. Again, it was the grandeur of her life and rule which compelled the tears of all eyes. For more than sixty years she has ruled an Empire vaster than that of Rome, and she has ruled it not by the sword, but by the clement encouragement and protection of her subjects. Our colonies have bowed their knee in loyalty, because they knew that the reckless tyranny of George III. is overpast, because they felt that wherever the British flag flew they had equal laws and equal chances. They knew also that, if the British Empire had not been wholly won by the sword, if it was not the mere spoils of a Cæsarean conquest, it was jealously guarded by the sword, and that the arms of England were always ready in its defence. So to India the Empress seemed a protector against oppression, a champion of freedom and wise government. So, like the Emperors of Rome, she was worshipped by the remoter tribes as half-divine. And, being dead, she is judged not as a woman, but as a king and a statesman,

and as king and statesman she will go down the ages admirable and admired.

If in her life she showed herself a king, it was with kingly honours that she was carried to her grave. Her funeral was the funeral of a soldier; it expressed the devotion which was a link between Queen Victoria and her Navy and Army. Rumour says that every detail of the procession was devised by the Queen herself, and for once we are content to believe the voice of rumour. The lady whose self-reliance has been conspicuous for so many years, did not leave the future to the chance of circumstance. When she resolved upon marriage she took the advice of none. She did as she thought just, and with that brave consciousness of death which is the last word of pathos, she planned how best she should be carried to her grave. Moreover, she knew that no ceremonial is too splendid to mark a monarch's death. Pomp and pageantry are the proud accompaniments of kings. She could not slink into the tomb like the least of her subjects. As she died in courageous performance of her duty, so she was resolved that her obsequies should be worthy their august, if mournful, occasion. And it was her pleasure to sketch so noble a pageant as the world had never seen. The procession—from Osborne to Windsor—marched through a hundred miles of grief silently expressed. The journey across the sea was so wonderful in its imaginative simplicity that it eludes comparison. Never before was seen so marvellous a spectacle; never can it be repeated. The scene was perfect in contrast and appropriateness. On the one hand the towers of Osborne emerging from the woods which slope to the water's edge. On the other the harbour of Portsmouth, its hammers hushed, and the busy movement of the dockyard forgotten in silence. And between the silver strait, glittering in the sunlight of a premature spring. Then the lines of battle-ships, the

A naval pageant.

avenue through which the solemn *cortége* should pass, and nothing else between sea and sky. It was no demonstration for the people; it was a spectacle without spectators, since those who were privileged to see it were themselves a part of the procession. Before the minute-guns broke the silence, each man was a unit who knew his neighbours. When once the boats set out from Osborne, the ships which lined the march became as it were single and impersonal. You felt yourself part of a whole, you ceased to recognise your friends or to be conscious of their presence. You, with the others, made up a ship, which itself performed one act of homage, and your eyes were stretched, where all eyes were stretched, towards the Alberta. Then the invisible guns boomed and thundered; then the invisible music, born of the air, echoed in all ears. The impression was mystery, and a plain unconsciousness of time and space. Suddenly appeared the torpedo-boats, stealthy harbingers of grief, gliding like serpents of ill-omen in the pathway of death. The mournful mysterious music was heard again, and the Alberta passed solemnly by, a dark immovable figure, as of bronze, in her bows, and on board the precious burden of the dead Queen. So small a boat it seemed to carry so large a destiny, and it was this contrast between the tiny Alberta and the larger ships that followed that gave colour to the universal emotion. And when the mighty Hohenzollern came last, you recognised that the sentiment of grandeur may not be measured by bulk, that only the greatest ones of the earth might pass away into the tomb with so superb a humility. The ship steamed back to Southampton, the darkness of London engulfed you, but you were left with an imperishable memory. You had witnessed a beautiful act of homage, marred by no thought of vanity or self. The kings who witnessed it with you were indistinguishable as the iron plates of the warships. Only the dead Queen was visible to thought or sight. No

chatter disturbed the unseen harmony of aërial music; no touch of colour disturbed the concord of black and grey and silver.

Then the trumpet blares, and another pageant—this time of scarlet and gold—passes before our eyes. The largeness, the plainness of the naval spectacle are eclipsed in a blaze of colour and crowd. Yesterday the sailors mourned their Queen; to-day it is the soldiers who conduct the illustrious dead. Through the silence of London winds the procession, on to Windsor, where within the chapel of St George the assembled kings shall do honour to her Majesty. Nor did St George's, the home of pageants, ever witness so valiant a display. The suits of mourning were all put off. The solemnity of funeral marches seemed a strange contrast to the trappings of splendour. The church glittered with jewelled orders and splendid uniforms. There was illustrated the grandeur, not of England, but of Europe: kings, princes, Knights of the Garter, ambassadors, thronged the nave and packed the inner chapel of the Knights. Everywhere was the outward show of joyousness and magnificence. Yet the show was outward alone. All men were united in a common sorrow, and the splendour of the spectacle was the homage most properly paid to departed kings. Monarchs passed in their gorgeous panoply, and again we scarce noticed them. It was impossible to disengage this great man or that from the prevailing grandeur, since all thoughts were still for the burden borne up the aisle by the Guardsmen, shoulder high; and when the coffin passed through the screen into the chancel, lit by the furtive rushlights which twinkled dimly beneath the banners of the Knights, it seemed to have found a more fitting resting-place. Then, as in a dream, we heard the voices of bishops and heralds; we were conscious that the dignitaries of State and Church, men bearing ancient names and hereditary titles, had passed before us. The

In St George's Chapel.

rest was silence and a strange affright, and slowly we came out of the past into the present world which we know.

For the last great service in honour of our great Queen illustrated, as nought else could illustrate, the continuity of our splendid history. It was thus, we thought, that Elizabeth died and was buried; it was to a similar accompaniment of dignity and magnificence that all our kings have passed from the throne. And this reflection is our best comfort for the future. A nation prospers in continuity, greatness grows in progress, if its progress be not disturbed; and when we saw pass before our eyes the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Hereditary Earl Marshal of England, and the Keeper of the Great Seal, we forgot to-day, thinking only of yesterday and to-morrow. Kings and queens are born, reign, and die; but the country which respects its traditions lives always, superior to the buffetings of fortune and the evil surmises of false prophets. So Victoria, her work valiantly accomplished, is gathered to her fathers; but England remains, the better for her example, the braver for her courage, the greater for her wisdom.

And as we saw that "wonderful piece of earth" carried through the porch of St George's Chapel, we thought how majestic is the death of those who live majestically. The worshippers, noble as they seemed, were less in our mind and eye than the worshipful dead. There in the church's narrow space were the great kings of the earth, and they were there in subordination to the will and respect of our dead Queen. They walked behind her coffin in simple reverence, because they recognised in her the virtues and valour of their order. And again we thought, it is grandeur, not goodness, which thus attains its highest reward. Simple and austere as was Victoria, endowed as she was with the homelier virtues, she was yet a Queen who never tolerated familiarity nor

countenanced interference. When she passed in the streets, she seemed affable to her people, and her affability was never shaken. But she was a Queen, who, though she lived in no splendid isolation, though she appealed to the fancy of the world by no freak of luxury or extravagance, kept always aloof from impertinence or vain popularity. So when she died she was mourned not only by her people, whose grief was the sincerest, but by other kings, upon whose office she has conferred an honourable dignity. And thus it was that the simple grandeur of her naval procession best befitted the grand simplicity of her life and reign. She ruled the sea as no monarch has ever ruled there, and her progress from Osborne to Portsmouth impressed her admirers, with its mysterious poetry and its vague echoes of music and artillery, more deeply than the finest array of scarlet and gold. Her epitaph is written in the hearts of her subjects, her title to greatness is indisputable, and the last eloquent words of Elizabeth might well have been repeated with her last breath. "To be a King," said Elizabeth when for the last time she opened Parliament, "and to wear a crown is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that bear it. For myself, I was never so much enticed with the glorious name of King or the royal authority of a Queen, as delighted that God had made me His instrument to maintain His truth and glory, and to defend this kingdom from dishonour, damage, tyranny, and oppression." It was a proud boast, which Queen Victoria, in her devotion to the Divine will, might have echoed without pride or wilfulness.

APRIL.

Literature at the universities.

The announcement that a famous philanthropist is intent to found a scholarship at Oxford, which shall encourage the study of literature, recalls a reproach aimed at our universities since the beginning of time. Oxford and Cambridge, we have been told with painful iteration, have sedulously neglected the pursuit of letters. Our philanthropist evidently indorses the popular charge, and while we applaud his generosity, we may perhaps suggest without churlishness that his welldoing might have found a better occasion. There is an old proverb, "owls to Athens"; and though we are not blind to the manifold and grievous sins constantly sinned by our universities, they stand in no bitterer need of the humanities than London (let us say) or Birmingham. But the philanthropist may justly claim that the weight of authority inclines to his side, even though the method of reform is all his own.

The line of scholars and poets that have denounced their university as a harsh step-mother is long and varied. In the 'Return from Parnassus,' the unprofitableness of learning is already celebrated; and the Elizabethans condemned the mere scholar with an eloquence only justified by experience. The poet, always a rebel against the commonplace, resented then, as he resents now, the interference of the erudite, and no sooner was he come to take his place among the wits of London than he blamed his university for an empty pocket. Gray was less reasonable, and yet more violent

than the Elizabethans. They at least shook the dust of Cambridge from their feet, while Gray spent a studious life within the precincts of a despised college. His distaste of Cambridge was acquired early. As Kit Smart, his contemporary, deplored the fate of an eagle chained in a college court, so Gray felt the fetters heavy upon his proud intellect. "Surely it was of this place, now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon,"—thus he wrote in the first year of his residence—"that the prophet spoke when he said, 'The wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there: their forts and towers shall be a den for ever, a joy of wild asses; there shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch and gather under her shadow; it shall be a court of dragons; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.'" And yet, for all his profession of contempt, Gray found a serener peace in Cambridge than he could have found elsewhere. There, in the quiet seclusion of Pembroke, he studied the classics, watched the flowers grow in the college garden, and spun his gossamer web of poetry. What if "the high and mighty Prince Roger, surnamed the Long," appeared ridiculous to his witty eye, there were still books at his elbow, and birds sang in the trees.

The complaints of poets.

Contemptuous as was Gray, Gibbon equalled the contempt of his denunciation. "To the University of Oxford," he wrote, "I acknowledge no obligation; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son, as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother." But what could Oxford or any other university have taught the author of the 'Decline and Fall'? No human institution has ever yet been designed for the training of infant prodigies, and Gibbon was prodigious in the cradle. "I arrived at Oxford," he confessed, "with a stock of

erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a schoolboy would have been ashamed." We admit the erudition, we refuse to believe in the ignorance; and truly a boy who at fifteen was an adept in "exotic history," and "had already exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians," had little to get from the Oxford professors. So Southey and Shelley, Johnson and Darwin, all reproach their useless universities; and they reproached them because they asked too much of their teaching. Being inventors in literature or science, they expected to increase their own stock of learning within the walls of a college, and they forgot, in their displeasure at wasted time, that valuable knowledge comes of itself. As we have insisted before in these pages, the instruction of a university should have no end in view. If neither Oxford nor Cambridge can make lawyers or doctors, much less can they create historians or men of letters. Discipline is theirs to give: they cannot hope to retard or improve the achievement of an original mind.

Pedagogic neglect.

However, the complaints of Gray and Gibbon have found many an echo. It is complained, with a perfect justice, that our universities have done little for modern literature, that as a result of pedagogic neglect the task of criticism is disgracefully performed, and that the editing of English texts is left to the half-literate. Now, in these complaints there is a very large grain of truth. Our critics are no better than we and our literature deserve; our literary editors are wont to confuse the art of letters with philology; and the universities stand aside in moody indifference. But why should they not thus stand aside? We have no right to expect of any institution more than it can give. Oxford and Cambridge are ready with an admirable opportunity; and if a man be honestly interested in literature, he can learn more from books than

all the professors and all the lecturers of Europe can teach him. The true man of letters, in brief, needs no encouragement either from triposes or "post-graduate" courses, and we contemplate the errors of editors and critics with a cheerful spirit, because we know well that literature, if it be worth anything, will cheerfully survive the folly of pedants and the impotence of institutions.

Literature unteachable.

In the first place, literature is untaught and unteachable. Taste and ear and fancy are given to few, and given waywardly. Even the true scholar is ready-made before he betakes himself to Oxford or Cambridge, and if his scholarship is distinguishable from pedantry, he carries to the university far more than the university can give him. Porson was an eminent Grecian, not because he passed through the curriculum of Eton and Trinity, but because an appreciation of Greek literature was in his blood. No other system could have impaired or bettered his faculty; and as the highest scholarship cannot be forced, so the more delicate art of letters must be left to grow up in an unweeded garden. Marlowe and Jonson did not acquire their divine gift on the banks of the Cam. Maybe Gabriel Harvey profited as much from the discipline of Pembroke College as Spenser. To Thackeray, Tennyson, and FitzGerald, Trinity doubtless meant above all the meeting-place of friends, and if literature can be taught, a wise companionship is its purest encouragement.

That an appreciation of literature cannot be acquired is, then, the clearest lesson of literary history. But even if such an appreciation might be artificially inculcated, this painful inculcation would not be the business of our universities. As we have said before, the universities are not asked to equip their *alumni* for the practical professions. Their highest privilege is to provide such a discipline as shall render all tasks easy. When Gibbon protested against the impotence of Oxford, he was guilty

of an inapposite complaint. He expected a formal institution to take an interest in "exotic history," and he had no surer basis in reason than the recalcitrant parent, who grumbles that a seat of learning should neglect book-keeping. A narrow curriculum, in fact, is the safeguard of our universities, and the revolutions of the last thirty years might well appal the hardiest reformer. False sciences have followed one another into prosperity and distrust with amazing rapidity. Comparative Philology, for instance, had its day, and is now ceasing to be. If Professor Max Müller had had his way, he might, perhaps, have given a degree for a proficient knowledge of the solar heresy. And the best that we can hope for Oxford and Cambridge is a loyal respect for tradition, a sturdy mistrust of new studies. Mathematics and Classics are still the best instruments of learning. With their aid the brain may be rendered capable of any enterprise, and we shall not be confident concerning the future of Oxford and Cambridge until the present policy of tinker and change be for ever abandoned.

However, the universities have made their attempt, and students may, if they choose, pursue a course of modern literature. Now, the study of Greek and Latin presents difficulties which industry and intelligence alone can overcome. Modern literature is an open book to those who feel within them the spirit of appreciation. How, then, is modern literature to be taught? Two methods are possible, each of them fatal. The student who wishes to build a temple of learning upon the sandy foundation of ignorance may attempt to understand the vehicle or the thought which that vehicle carries. In the one case he drifts upon the rock of philology; in the other he sticks fast on the shallows of sign-post criticism. On either hand, he is far remote from the haven of literature. But the universities, legislating in a panic, have done their best, and while Cambridge has devised

a "Medieval and Modern Language Tripos," Oxford has founded an unpopular school of "Literæ Anglicæ." In neither university is the innovation successful or esteemed. Oxford plods wearily along the stony ground of Gothic, while Cambridge more jauntily pursues the primrose-path of discursive criticism. Both have failed egregiously, and an examination of the papers that have been set is sufficient to convince the most sanguine of a lamentable mistake.

Literæ Anglicæ.

For Oxford, then, English literature is an affair of punctuation and etymology. Beowulf and Chaucer, Langland and Shakespeare, are put upon the Procrustean bed of philology. They are lopped and docked until they remain mere masses of curious words, and when the zealous undergraduate finds it too easy to explain Shakespeare's use of "commodity," "function," "pregnant," &c., he is invited to the severer task of turning Gothic into modern English. This, of course, may be excellent practice. But neither in form nor matter is Gothic comparable to Greek, and we are old-fashioned enough to believe that more may be learned from Æschylus than from Ulphilas. Thus Oxford. Cambridge is far more reckless. Though not free from the philological taint, her examination, which includes also a selection of other modern languages, is so discursive as to test nothing more than the hopefulness of the candidate. A knowledge which is not exact is little worth to the young, and we do not envy the mind of the undergraduate who, among ten questions to be answered between nine and twelve, is asked in one of them to "appreciate Shakespeare's Sonnets as poems." Could there be a louder invitation to flummery? Here there is no question of scholarship. Even though ten per cent of our population are guilty of treatises upon the Sonnets, the most give more to the task than eighteen minutes, and reserve this monument of boredom for

their riper age. But the student who is asked his views, not his knowledge, must fall back upon parrot-like repetition or false appreciation. And were it possible to ask of his knowledge, what form shall the questions take? The most of dates may well be left to the books of reference which enshrine them, and the private life of a poet is no more interesting in itself than the private life of a tinker. So far, then, the universities, in their attempts to patronise modern literature, have done no more than set up a false standard of criticism, or exalt the insecure and lowly science of philology. One truth only reconciles us to the experiment—its ominous failure. In Oxford less than twenty desperate adventurers have assailed the school of "Literæ Anglicæ" since its foundation, and the undergraduates of Cambridge have proved themselves little more courageous.

Nor can we imagine how the study of modern literature can be made a reputable branch of science. Taste should be rigorously excluded from a sure test of knowledge, and if you silence the voice of taste, how shall you test a student's knowledge of a poet whose language is no barrier to understanding? But, as a critic has recently pointed out, the universities have committed their gravest sin in divorcing modern from ancient literature. With resolute dogmatism an Oxford professor asserts that English literature has naught in common with the literatures of Greece and Rome. So he would put our poetry and prose into a watertight compartment, and pretend that the Shakespearian drama and the Miltonic epic were evolved out of Gothic or of nothingness. And yet this crowning folly does not perturb us. It merely proves an ignorance that is akin to jealousy, and happily the future of criticism is not in the hands of those who profess the mysteries of Anglo-Saxon.

Taste no science.

The universities, then, have not unnaturally proved

their incapacity to teach an unteachable subject. And if by a freak of fortune they had succeeded, to what would they have attained? They would, perhaps, have raised the prevailing standard of our criticism. So at least thinks Mr Churton Collins, and we find it hard to believe him. Indeed, this scourge of critics contradicts himself very prettily. He proves at considerable length, and with some ferocity, that the universities are incompetent to produce respectable text-books; that one Press at least does not deem it undignified to circulate a book defaced by inexcusable and notorious blunders. Yet none the less he would gladly place the teaching of literary criticism in the hands of bodies which he despises. Of course he would attempt to reform the system before he established his post-graduate course. But even after the severest reform, the blind would still lead the blind, and the mob of useless critics would be reinforced by a handful of pedants, who would perform their unnecessary task no better than the ancient hacks.

The truth is, we need no more critics. The extension of the universities, with its cheap culture and flagrant sentimentalism, has completed the work of universal education and the cheap press. Everybody is cultured nowadays, and the wants of the "cultured" are easily satisfied. The standard is depressed in every direction, and if Matthew Arnold or Sainte-Beuve revisited the earth, he would have as small chance of earning a living by criticism as would Aristotle himself. The daily tasks of the critics are efficiently performed by the young men who are not "smart" enough to be "picturesque reporters," and for the most part they are quite equal to their task. They can applaud the theology of Marie Corelli, or detect in Mr Le Gallienne "the solemn eloquence of an abiding truth," just as well as those who have gone through a dozen ante- or post-graduate courses. They can esteem no literary masterpiece, because their touchstone of literature is the columns

of their own "organ." But if a book tickles the curious by anonymity, or is written by a "breezy" novelist who has worked his way home before the mast (with the limelight on), or has insulted the British officer from the security of a bomb-proof shelter, it is sure of what the ingenious journalist calls a "hearing." And doubtless it deserves it, and interviews will most properly follow its publication, and the gentleman's photograph, goggle-eyes, murderous moustache and all, will be in the papers, and the unknown lady's tea-set will be described, and while her name is suppressed her "cheery" villa will excuse a flood of eloquence, and her tradesmen will enjoy the advertisement, which only reaches her by stealth. Such is the depth to which criticism has sunk, and it is hardly worth the while of our ancient universities to raise it.

Ragbags of literature.

Not that we deplore the banality of modern criticism. On the contrary, we delight in its helpless humour and grotesque impertinence. One weekly ragbag of literature is our constant solace, and we would never ask its judgment to be sane so long as its "personalities" are diverting. The scraps of biography with which its columns are peppered, the gentle indiscretion wherewith the curtain is drawn aside from the "home-life" of some wealthy novelist, are far more amusing than the most profound exposition of first principles. The gravity of those illiterate writers, who from time to time deplore that Mr Meredith cannot touch the heart of the people, could not be acquired at Oxford; and we would not have our universities spoil sport for all the literature in the world. Poetry is all very well, and fiction has been perchance an elegant art; but what are poetry and fiction compared to short chatty paragraphs? We want paragraphs, and we want them chatty, and we can get as many as we like for a few halfpence. Why, then, should we bestir the universities to useless effort? Our criticism is on a

level with the works which suggest its incursions into the privacy of "happy home-life," and we would not have it bettered for the world. Why should we read the prose of Dionysius the Halicarnassian when the gossip of the 'Tatler' is under our eye? And of what worth is the masterpiece of Longinus when it is weighed in the balance against the foremost of our "literary paragraphists"?

The serious critic is born, like the poet. Him can no imperious system improve, no sternly authorised teacher instruct. "I cannot see," said Dr Johnson, "that lectures can do so much good as reading the books from which the lectures are taken." And the serious critic will carry away from a university little that will directly assist his craft. True, he will owe it an admirable training in the classics; but the just comparison of ancient with modern, the right appreciation of English and French literatures, must be the work of his own brain. Nor could it be otherwise. It is only the facile disciples of the Extension system who can teach "æsthetics." Graver professors recognise that taste can only be sincere when it is the result of direct impression and secret study. Though facts may be pumped into a receptive mind, a taste which is dictated from without is no better than the cheap "culture" provided at so much a head by Mr Sadler and his colleagues.

And while the serious critic needs no aid, the real practitioner can learn nothing from our ancient seats of learning. His best allies are the charwoman and the office-boy, whose erudition he need not rival, and whose intelligence it is not the business of Oxford or Cambridge to shape. The work he achieves is amusing—that is all. It is forgotten as soon as the works which are its excuse, and if the best of modern literature is obscured by the tittle-tattle of the critics, that does not matter. If there were no critics, it would be obscured by somebody (or something) else. But sooner or later the flail of time

winnows the threshing-floor of literature, and posterity may separate the wheat from the chaff.

The real lesson of our universities.

Wherefore we feel no resentment against the futility of our critics; we can hope no better fate for our philanthropists' scholarship than that it should encounter but little competition; and while we admit the truth of our philanthropists' implied reproach, we do not like the remedy. All the encroachments that have been made upon the curricula of our universities during the last quarter of a century have been unhappily inspired. They have tended to divert our academic energy from its true channel. The innovators forget that the highest function of an academy is to teach its alumni to learn, to think, and to act. For many centuries our English universities have educated their pupils without thought of the future: the undergraduates learned the art of converse one from another; in the freedom of college-rooms they practised the eternal contest of wits; and the classics not only revealed to them the finest literature of the world, but proved the value of mental discipline. So, in the pleasant confusion of bodily and intellectual athletics, our students grew into statesmen or writers or governors. No writer has better expressed the true spirit of Cambridge that Fitz-Gerald, whose 'Euphranor' celebrates the battle not only of the wits but of the boats. A strenuous race follows a strenuous argument, and "the crews pulling with all their might compacted into perfect rhythm," belong as intimately to the place as do the young scholars, who dispute of Shakespeare and the 'Broad Stone of Honour.' "Bravo, St John's!" "Go it, Trinity!"—these cries are a better part of our education than many courses of English literature. And where, save in Greece and in Plato, shall you match the sentiment of the last page? "Then," says the writer, "waiting a little while to hear how the winner had won and the loser lost, and watching Phidippus en-

gaged in eager conversation with his defeated brethren, I took Euphranor and Lexilogus under either arm (Lycion having got into better company elsewhere), and walked home with them across the meadow leading to the town, whither the dusky troops of gownsmen with all their confused voices seemed, as it were, evaporating in the twilight, while a Nightingale began to be heard among the flowering Chestnuts of Jesus." Here is a reminiscence which neither the denunciation of the moderns nor the ill-advised generosity of Mr Passmore Edwards can either improve or decry.

MAY.

"Give me th' avow'd, th' erect, the manly foe,
Bold I can meet—perhaps may turn his blow;
But of all plagues, good Heav'n, thy wrath can send,
Save, save, oh! save me from the *Candid Friend!*"

The Candid Friend.

During the past year the pro-Boers, lending an eager ear to every unsupported calumny, have displayed with an acrid insolence the hatred they bear to their own country. England can do no right—that is their motto; and so keen is their joy in what they believe England's failure, that no concession would appease their greedy detestation. Happily they find approval where they pledge their affection — abroad; at home their spiteful ignorance is sternly neglected save in their own packed and guarded meeting-houses. But there is another cannibal active in the land, who would publicly devour his own kin. And he is more dangerous, because less ingenuous, than the disciples of Stead. For he is a Candid Friend he wishes nothing but well to the Empire. It is nothing less than patriotism which moves him to reveal the horrid truth that Great Britain is ruined body and soul. Of course, there is one possible method of retrievement. If only the rulers of the empire will listen to the profound advice of the Candid Friend, all will be well. So he wanders up and down, fatuous and irascible. You may hear him in clubs murmuring, "Monstrous! monstrous!" He bustles about, prophesying disaster, and growing every day more and more arrogant. Nor can we pass him by with a shrug of contempt, for the man

has an easy knack of deceiving the unwary. His noisy protestation of patriotism does not sound so hollow as it should to those who know not the type, while the facile schemes which he sketches over a whisky-and-soda seem quite pleasant to his friends through the haze of tobacco-smoke. Moreover, he loses no opportunity of ill-doing: being idle, he is preternaturally busy in his idleness. He is carried hither and thither in a whirlwind of talk; he writes uninformed articles in sensational journals, and he is so desperately in love with himself that he spurns his muffin every day that his name does not shine in print.

The Candid Friend, then, is a grotesque figure; but unhappily he is dangerous as well as grotesque. His reckless jeremiads are read by thousands ignorant as himself, and since he appeals to the imposing vanity of smug persons, he is sure of a large and appreciative audience. The mob takes a genuine pride in what it believes to be the mistakes of others. A gentle glow of superiority warms the heart of the citizen when he is told that this general is a madman, or that Minister a miscreant. Republics have been known to live upon abuse of this kind, and there are many in England who would push their country, if they could, into the lowest pit of democracy. So the Candid Friend, knowing his audience, shouts that England is on the very point of dissolution. Her trade is gone to Germany or America; the late war, which has made us the laughing-stock of Europe, proves our incapacity to fight; and as for our navy, everybody knows that it is a collection of tin-pots, every one warranted to go to the bottom at the mere sight of an enemy. Such is the story which we read day after day in our newspapers, and the Candid Friends, who are never weary of telling it, reck little enough of the harm which they may inflict.

For even if the charges, thus hastily brought, were true, our Candid Friends would still be the enemies of

their country. Policy should dictate a subtler method of reform. Suppose a merchant of the City to feel the sting of competition. Would he straightway proclaim his decadence to the world? Would he confess in the face of all competitors that he knew he was worsted, and though he did not propose to shut up shop, he was eager for the encouragement of his rivals to announce an approaching defeat? The many brawlers who clamour day after day for "efficiency" assure us that their ambition is to "run the Empire" upon what they inelegantly describe as "business lines"; and forthwith they adopt a policy which would ruin the most prosperous business in a month. In brief, had they the management of the Empire, they would publish it abroad that the Empire was bankrupt in money and in courage, and leave the Empire's remains to be eaten by the vultures from abroad. But our Candid Friends, were they in loyal earnest, would seek another means of improvement. They would secretly assail the Chambers of Commerce, in whose hand lies the prosperity of our merchants. They would study our shortcomings, and conceal them until they had discovered a quick and perfect remedy. They would modestly hide their own head, that the work of their ambition might be the more efficiently accomplished. And when they had finished their task, no one would be the wiser; the Empire only would have profited. But so quiet a triumph would not suit our Candid Friends. It would not ensure what they most earnestly desire, a full and flagrant advertisement. It would not enable them to brag that they alone knew how to save the country. Wherefore, they do their utmost to discredit Great Britain in the eyes of the world, and are content, because for a brief hour they have themselves posed as patriots—misunderstood.

His dangerous jeremiads.

Mean as their method is, the harm they do is not easily calculable. Commerce, as a wiseacre said of

fame, is a very subtle thing: destroy prestige, and you may destroy reality. If articles are published day by day in our papers, signed by alleged patriots, who declare that commerce has deserted us, that we have no ships, and that we are cowards all, our commerce, though not our courage, is already in danger. "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him," is a sound motto, and a hundred "patriots" have done their best during the last year to hang our dog of an Empire. Germany and America have absorbed all our trade—so we read in all the popular prints; and if this falsehood is repeated often enough, the world may begin to believe it. Then the world will cease to regard England as a mart, it will buy no goods that are not made either in Germany or the States, and the Candid Friends will have achieved their purpose nobly. They will whisper a fat and drowsy "I told you so," and flatter themselves that the country was ruined because the country's Ministers rejected their advice.

For a moment we have supposed that all the complaints which have been made against our Empire found an excuse in fact. But even this vast supposition does not justify the groaners. What, then, shall we say of our critics when we find their figures false and their reproach superfluous? Unhappily we can say nothing, for it is no crime to libel a nation, and the Candid Friend may work his worst, with the full assurance that no punishment will befall him. However, his certain immunity does not touch his honour; it merely makes him more active in defamation, and here is the substance of his charge. England, says he, has lost or is fast losing her trade. The competition of Germany and America is in his opinion too violent to be withstood. The new commercial Powers, he declares, are "stealing" our customers; and we might pertinently ask, Why *stealing*, O Candid Friend, why *stealing?* His argument is as

Foreign competition.

largely fortified by figures as by venom, and he has no difficulty in proving to his own satisfaction that the trade of our rivals is increasing faster than our own. But the true basis of his argument is terror. He seems to resent a competitor with a craven fear. Yet he should know that competition has always been the impetus of the English trade; and why should we dread without that which we cheerfully accept within? If it be true that Germany and America can supply a more useful "article" at a lower price than ourselves, by all means let them take the market, or let us bestir our manufacturers to claim supremacy on the only admissible ground of excellence. Nor will our manufacturers, if they be worthy the national esteem, sit down quietly under the first stress of competition. The dastards who air their candour in the press may tremble in their German-made shoes. The manufacturers whose decadence is deplored know far better the meaning of enterprise, and we are pleased to leave the future of England in their hands. The real proof of decay is not in the growing competition, but in the cowardice of those who dread it; and we should be truly miserable if we put the words of our critics higher than the deeds of our industrious manufacturers. In brief, history cannot show a more dastardly episode than that which has lately disgraced us, and the sooner we cease to groan about competition the sooner shall we tackle it with address, and by our sure success silence the tongues of those who live by pessimism.

An ambassador's opinion.

Ignorance, as we have said, is the sure mark of "candour," and the following passage from the 'Shifting Scenes' of Sir Edward Malet, who has a profound knowledge both of America and of Germany, should shame the waverers.

"It is a singular thing," says Sir Edward, "that while we English, of all nations of the world, have recognised and experienced

the enormous advantage to progress which comes from competition in every branch of our internal development, we cannot bring our minds to view the competition of other nations as destined to produce the same progress for the benefit of the world, and to welcome it as a further incentive to our own action and as a preventive to our going to sleep. There is no question that the rapid advance of Germany has given us a rude and healthy shaking, and that we owe to it a great part of our own progress in recent years.

"I will put it broadly. Look at a map of Africa published before 1885, and compare it with a map of to-day. You will see that vast tracts of territory in the east, west, and south have been added, I will not say to the dominions, but certainly to British dominion: there is not a square foot of these additions to our territorial influence which has not been sanctioned by treaty or agreement, and most of these have been due to the initiative of Germany. Prince Bismarck called together the Congo Conference —it confirmed to us the basin of the Niger. In Count Caprivi's time we acquired by agreement with Germany the protectorate of Zanzibar, and the sphere of British influence which extends to the head-waters of the Nile, and we agreed upon the boundaries of the British territories, including Rhodesia in the south. . . .

"The activity of the Germans redoubled ours, and if the regions which came under our influence were, as is said, merely bounded by paper tracings, still their development has begun, and its progress is due to the healthy competition which Germany has forced upon us. To what do we owe the alacrity with which our House of Commons has voted every increase in the estimates of the Navy which successive Governments of late years have proposed? Has it not been due to the growth of foreign colonial aspirations, the chief and most engrossing being German?"

Of course it has, and there is room upon the surface of the globe for all of us. No advantage can be won by the perversely exaggerated jingoism which blenches at the sight of a German outside his own country. We have our Colonies, and we are proud of them, nor do we propose to yield one inch of them to the encroachment of foreigners. But we know the value of a colonial policy well enough not to condemn the expansion of

our neighbours with a timid hypocrisy. And as we should not shirk competition, as we should not fear the advance of Germany, so we cannot accept the garbled statistics of the grumblers. One serious fallacy vitiates the most pessimistic figures. It is obvious that a new firm at the outset of its career will make more progress than an old-established rival, and in certain trades both Germany and America are new firms. The new firm starts (so to say) from scratch. It brings into the market something unseen before. The old-established firm, on the other hand, if it has done itself justice, has already reached a high point of development; its excellence is known to all customers; and an increase of profit is manifestly more difficult than it was when the trade was young and untried. The most enterprising factory cannot do more than its utmost, and it is no mark of decadence if, having attained its climax, it rests solidly upon the heights. The real competition, in fact, between England and Germany and America, will not begin until Germany or America is so close upon England's heels that England suffers—and that time, as statistics prove, is not yet.

The critics of the Army.

Having demolished British trade, the Candid Friend proceeds to demolish the British army. The country's interests, we are told on every side, were shamefully betrayed during the war. Indeed this betrayal is so commonly taken for granted that the busybodies of the press, now unhappily to be reckoned with, seem to keep the proper paragraphs standing in type. Our generals cannot lead, our soldiers dare not fight, our transport has broken down hopelessly, our doctors are habitually drunk, and while the troops are starved in the field, they are murdered in the hospitals. These we believe are the commonplaces of criticism, and as such they have been telegraphed from one end of the world to the other. It is the mark of the foreign "patriot," as of our own,

that he accepts the utterances of war correspondents as gospel-truth, and the opinion of the best-known military historian in Germany would do credit to a halfpenny newspaper or to the most candid of our critics. This famous historian, then, according to the most valuable essay with which Lieut.-Colonel Henderson prefaces Count Sternberg's ingenuous 'Experiences of the Boer War' (London: Longmans), declares "that khaki was not taken into wear until after many defeats; that the English infantry attacked in solid line; that volleys were the only species of fire employed; and that the Boers never made use of the spade." Such statements as these might well have been made, and no doubt have been made, by a hundred correspondents, who are eager to reform their country, and whose honour does not oblige them to accuracy.

Worse than this: it is accepted as a commonplace by the writers in newspapers, and other persons ignorant of warfare, that the behaviour of our generals in the Transvaal has been ridiculous. The mass of evidence, which is gradually growing upon the other side, is not likely to change the baseless views held by our detractors. For the next year or two they will denounce Lord Lansdowne, Lord Roberts, and all our army, and then, having turned a moral somersault, they will point with a finger of pride to the men whom they now insolently traduce. Wellington's conduct of the Peninsula aroused an even bitterer contempt in the minds of the ignorant than Lord Roberts' splendid march upon Bloemfontein. But nevertheless it is well to point out that men who know their business are content with our conduct of the war. Lord Roberts is a fair man as well as a skilful leader, and his despatches prove that our transport and organisation were admirable. Moreover, as Colonel Henderson has clearly pointed out, the campaign in Africa has entirely changed the face of warfare. The difficult country, the smokeless powder, the flat trajectory of

the small-bore rifle, and the invisibility of the man who uses it, have imposed upon us a new art of battle. Yet neither the foreign critics nor our own wise "patriots" have given us any credit for readily accepting the new conditions.

The libels of Austria.

At a lecture delivered in Vienna, before the Austro-Hungarian Staff, says Colonel Henderson, "it was stated that there were times when the troops could not be got to advance after a loss of only 3 to 9 per cent, and that at Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso they took to flight." Of course this sapient lecturer produced no evidence of his statements. He was probably content to filch the falsehood from the press. But, says Colonel Henderson, "had he known that the troops at Colenso retired by order of the general-in-chief, and retired with the utmost unwillingness; had he known that at Stormberg they were suddenly assailed by a heavy flank fire at short range, that, instead of running in panic, they advanced upon the enemy, and only retired when they found that he was posted on the crest of an inaccessible cliff; had he known that at Magersfontein the Highland Brigade held on, in a perfectly hopeless position, in the midsummer blaze of a South African sun and without water, for more than nine long hours; had he known that throughout the campaign the great difficulty was not to get the men to advance, but to prevent them advancing prematurely, —he would probably have realised that the failures of an indomitable soldiery were due to mistakes in leading and to the peculiar conditions of modern battle." The evidence of competent soldiers, however, who are "content to know that the manhood of the race shows no sign of deterioration," is quite helpless to convince the smart rhetoricians, who are convinced that the Empire is not run on "business lines." They know much better than to accept what they would call "interested" testimony. Nor do they willingly hear the rare praise of

impartial foreigners; their mind being fixed hopefully upon disaster, they laugh when Count Sternberg explains that "modern arms have rendered it much easier to act on the defensive, and very much more difficult to assume the offensive." For them it is enough to count heads, and to assert that an efficient army would have overmatched our achievement in half the time. For ourselves we prefer to believe Count Sternberg, whose "Military Reflections" are a lucid and intelligent piece of criticism, and who declares in all good faith that "no Continental army would have done better than the English with the same or even somewhat greater numbers; and I personally doubt if, as regards practical equipment, technical smartness, and readiness, a Continental army would have done so well."

The proper doctors of the State.

If the State be unsound, we would not have its disease concealed from our Ministers, who are its proper doctors; but no good can come of showing its sores, hideously exaggerated, at the street-corner. And however unsound it may be, it does not yet stand in need of such nostrums as quacks and charlatans may prescribe. There is a dignified method of treatment ordained by our constitution, and if the doctors, now seated at what our critics would call the "bedside," are inefficient, there is a very simple way of discharging them. In other words, our Ministers are responsible to Parliament and to the country; they need not listen to the clamour of the press, nor tremble at the irresponsible threatening of impeachment. Moreover, none of the remedies proposed are agreeable to our national pride. Our Candid Friends believe that they can save the State by suddenly converting their countrymen into something else. The panic-monger would hastily transform the Briton into a Frenchman. He would urge his compatriots to lay aside all their ancient stoicism; he would persuade them that calmness under a reverse was the mark of timidity; and if he

dared carry his argument to a conclusion, he would have capped Colenso by a revolution. This process of disintegration was commenced twenty years ago, and after Majuba Sir Evelyn Wood was already convinced that "our character had undergone some change — I believe from increasing Continental intercourse." But while the panic-mongers would make us French, the pedants would make us German. We are not mechanical enough to please those who believe that nothing is admirable outside Berlin. Yet nothing will ever be gained by taking on a false complexion. Whatever we have achieved in the past, we achieved because we were Englishmen; and in the future the same qualities will have the best chance of success. If we are to preserve the Empire we have made, we must develop along our own line. We must be neither sham Frenchmen nor sham Germans; we must remain genuine Englishmen, despising not our limitations. Until the end of time we shall make mistakes, and reck not of them; until the end of time we shall prove that a character compacted of extraordinary perseverance and occasional stupidity is not the worst equipped for the struggle of life. At anyrate, we are neither comedians nor machines, nor have we hitherto displayed the democratic hatred of all governors, which in some countries makes the true patriotism a disgrace.

But the Candid Friend's theory of government is based upon suspicion. He would insist upon the "vigilant supervision" of postmen and Ministers alike. But in all States you must trust somebody; and if the Prime Minister is not secure without a spy, to whom shall the spy acknowledge allegiance? *Quis custodiet custodes?* The ideal safeguard, of course, will never be found, and a generous confidence is always better than a policy of Peeping Tom. Yet our constitution, even though it be the growth of time and chance, is more efficiently protected than any other devised by the wit of man.

Behind the people speak the Commons, behind the Commons frown the Peers, behind the Peers the Crown suggests. In the last resort the Crown yields, and, if we consider the limitations of the human intellect, perhaps it is better that the Crown should counsel rather than command. A wise Queen is not always on the throne, and unhappily we cannot make a rule from the wisdom of Victoria. Yet nothing is clearer than that, if Mr Gladstone had accepted his sovereign's advice, we should have been saved millions of treasure and thousands of lives. Such is one of the lessons taught by the 'Life of the Right Hon. Hugh Childers' (London: John Murray), which has recently been published. As a school of politics we know no better book: we only regret that it touches a period of disaster, and that Mr Childers served so callous a master as Mr Gladstone.

Mr Childers' Life.

For Mr Childers every Englishman must cherish a qualified admiration. He was the very type of the expert administrator. He managed no department that he did not improve. He was too complacent sometimes; sometimes he showed himself narrow-minded, as when from fear of an "anomaly" he would persuade the Commander-in-Chief to address his letters no longer from the time-honoured "Horse Guards," but from the busy "War Office." But the real lesson of this 'Life' of Mr Childers is the wisdom of our Queen. She knew all things, she followed the course of every war and of every negotiation; she gave her advice simply, and it was always sound. That the Government rejected it was no fault of hers, while it was our disaster. Her knowledge of affairs is as remarkable as her rapid judgment; and there is no doubt that, had there been no Mr Gladstone in the background, implacable in his levity, Mr Childers would readily have welcomed the wisdom of the Queen. Above all things, the Queen showed a warm sympathy with her sailors and soldiers.

The first letters which she addressed to Mr Childers advocated the wearing of beards in the navy, and prove that she was always mindful of the comfort of our forces. But never did she forget that the empire depended upon the efficiency of our troops. So she writes, in 1880, "trusting that no reductions in the army are contemplated, and asking whether, on the contrary, an increase should not be thought of."

So on another occasion: "The Queen cannot believe that Mr Childers desires to destroy all *esprit de corps;*" and when, after the miserable fiasco of Majuba, Mr Childers took every step to enable a successful advance to be made, and recommended that the command should be intrusted to Sir Frederick Roberts, the Queen replied: "Entirely approve; had thought of this myself." But then you read with shame and confusion that "the Cabinet did not feel convinced that what had occurred at Majuba justified their breaking off the negotiations they had ordered Sir G. Colley to open with Kruger." There speaks the timid tortuous voice of Gladstone, which, unhappily, was able to silence the experienced wisdom of the Queen and the energetic patriotism of Mr Childers. But the Queen is always justified of her counsel. Throughout the Egyptian troubles she alone kept in the straight path. She strongly warned the Government not to send out the troops "before all that is required is ready"; she insisted that Arabi should be punished with proper severity; and when the worst seemed over she was firm in suggesting that the troops should not be too hastily withdrawn. But what could Queen and country avail against a histrionic Minister, who despised disaster and would not brook opposition?

The wisdom of the Queen.

The chief lesson, then, taught by Mr Childers' 'Life' is the wisdom of the Queen, which might have averted the war which has lately harassed us. No wonder Lord Kimberley has since confessed the fault which he once

committed in opposing her judgment. No wonder Mr Gladstone has been covered with an obloquy which shrouds no other statesman of the century. For if the Queen be the true hero of the drama, Mr Gladstone is the supreme villain, and the part which he plays in this 'Life' of Mr Childers illustrates the worst danger of our constitution. Mr Gladstone ruled the country against the judgment of the Queen and without the sympathy of his colleagues. Mr Childers does not often mention him, and very seldom with approval. Thus in 1876 he writes: "The Anti-Turkish agitation is noisy, but I do not think very deep. . . . People are beginning to doubt the wisdom of playing the Russian game; and, for my part, while I should be only too glad to see the Turk out of Europe, I would willingly pay an income-tax of 2s. 6d. in the pound to keep the Russian out of Constantinople." Yet, for all the opposition of his colleagues, Mr Gladstone went on the stump, with what result we know.

Mr Gladstone's baneful influence.

This, indeed, is the great danger of our constitution—the influence of the actor. But happily the actor makes a rare appearance in politics, and Mr Gladstone will not soon find a rival. None the less, it is a curious situation. On the one hand, Mr Gladstone, with a flood of words, and a heartless disregard of facts; on the other, stern practical men such as Mr Childers and Lord Hartington, powerless to combat their leader. In acquiescence Mr Childers showed his weakness. Shrewd he was, and eminent in business, but he could not make his influence felt outside his department. He took up less room in the world than the less efficient politician who led him. And so firm was the hold Mr Gladstone had upon his colleagues, that they seem to have endured the last indignity rather than resign. Majuba must needs have been a heavy blow to Mr Childers, yet he sanctioned the surrender. Throughout the Egyptian

embroilment, when Mr Gladstone, with his usual ingenuity, declared that though we had bombarded Alexandria we were not at war, Mr Childers hardly conceals his contempt. But Mr Gladstone always had his way, and his tragic career proves with unfortunate lucidity that a democracy's most serious danger is the gift of eloquence. Indeed, he who would understand the real strength and weakness of his country will learn far more from a study of Mr Childers' simple, straightforward biography than from the sermons of a hundred pessimists.

JUNE.

The shadow on the stage.

A DARK shadow has fallen across the British Stage, a shadow which even the sunny optimism of actors and managers will find it difficult to dispel. It is cast neither by the ignorance of critics nor by the discontent of playgoers. They are the theatre's own friends who have at last dared to interrupt its effulgence, and ere long the darkness of night may envelop that which, with the aid of advertisement, has appeared the most brilliant of our institutions. In other words, a well-known dramatist and a distinguished actor have proclaimed in the shameful openness of print that our stage is not always the happy haunt of genius, that our plays are sometimes hotch-potches of vulgarity, and (worse still) that many of our gifted mummers do not know the rudiments of their trade. These charges are neither new nor surprising. They have been brought a hundred times by disinterested persons, and have been cheerfully ascribed to malice or ignorance by the pontiffs of the green-room. He who withholds his admiration from an actor, we have been told, is plainly an enemy of the drama, when indeed he is not a blackmailer. Wherefore our great managers have shrugged their shoulders, and borne the obloquy (unmerited of course) in a spirit of arrogant martyrdom. But the most recent attacks cannot be so lightly passed over, since they are directed from within the fold by interested colleagues.

Mr Henry Arthur Jones, in fact, and Mr F. R. Benson have confided to the world their ominous discontent.

They have boldly explained the shortcomings of the theatre, and the single word "envy" is not a sufficient answer to their candid indictment. For Mr H. A. Jones is almost our only playwright. He it was who some years since discovered that literature and the drama were not necessarily opposed, and if his own practice has not justified his theory, that is not his fault. The "literary drama" may be a vile, as it should be a redundant, phrase, but despite this vain eccentricity Mr H. A. Jones is popular, and to be popular is, we are informed, the one and only object of the theatre. Mr F. R. Benson, on the other hand, is a manager to whom the British drama is profoundly indebted. He, alone of his generation, has provided a practical school of acting; he has neither relied upon long runs nor eclipsed his company by the scintillation of a single star. That which was achieved by the old stock companies has been achieved in a lesser degree by his management, and a young player who has mastered his parts in Mr Benson's repertory need not complain of enforced idleness. Now, Messrs Jones and Benson, different though their ambitions may be, agree in condemning our modern stage. While trivial plays are rapturously applauded, the art of acting, we are told, dies of disuse, and the single measure of success is the unworthy accumulation of vast fortunes. Remedies are proposed on this side and that: we must have a National Theatre, says one; salvation lies in a Government subsidy, cries another; and all the while musical comedies, imported from New York, clamour for serious recognition, or melodrama wags its hoary head in the sacred name of Art.

What ails the theatre?

Before we discuss the remedy, let us consider the disease. If the theatre is ailing, whence comes the malady? The diagnosis is not difficult, since the symptoms are obvious and universal: the drama dies because it has confused its functions; it has wasted its true strength to enhance a

spurious beauty, and it resembles a man who should sacrifice both brain and muscle to increase by an inch or two the growth of his beard. Now, the drama is made up of three elements—the play, the actors, the scenic ornament; and the presentation is only perfect when the three elements are harmoniously composed. The play, of course, comes first, being the one and only excuse for the theatre. Actors and the scene are but a means—the best available—of expressing a writer's meaning. If only we could perfect the mechanism of marionettes, the theatre were easily reformed, but the awkwardness of puppets compels us to accept the existing materials. A brief retrospect will show that when the theatre commanded an intelligent admiration, the poet was an omnipotent and unquestioned master. The simple decoration of the Greek stage was ordained by a holy tradition. The actors, whose heads were hidden in conventional masks, and whose feet were propped on clumsy pattens, could neither ogle nor strut. They were neither discussed nor advertised. Nobody knew their names nor cared about their visages. Their business was to speak clearly and simply the lines intrusted to them by the author, whose supremacy was undisputed. So, too, the actors who entertained the Romans, when leisure came to that arduous people, were commonly slaves or persons of no account, nor did the works of Plautus and Terence need any other embellishment than a rigidly prescribed back-scene.

A retrospect.

When the drama was revived after centuries of oblivion, the simple fashion still prevailed. The splendour of Shakespeare depended no more upon the mouthing of an actor than upon the ingenuity of a stage-carpenter. The round O was sufficient for his most splendid effects, and the highest attribute of an actor was "harmonious elocution." No foolish attempt was made to "act" the poet's masterpieces. Even in Cibber's time it was enough

to say that Betterton "spoke" Shakespeare with a finer distinction than any of his contemporaries, while the absence of women from the stage suggests that the vanity of realism was not yet invented. Yet soon after Shakespeare's day the actor and scene-shifter began to raise their heads. Inigo Jones adorned the masques of Ben Jonson with cumbrous machines, and the Restoration ensured the ultimate ruin of the stage. The King's Players moved to a house in Vere Street, by Claremarket:—

> "There they continued for a year or two," says the author of the 'Historia Histrionica,' "and then removed to the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, where they first made use of scenes, which had a little before been introduced upon the public stage by Sir William Davenant at the Duke's Old Theatre in Lincolns-Inn-Fields, but afterwards very much improved with the addition of curious machines, by Mr Betterton, at the new theatre in Dorset Garden, to the great expense and continual charge of the players. . . . About the same time that scenes first entered upon the stage at London, women were taught to act their own parts; since when we have seen at both houses several excellent actresses, justly praised as well for beauty as for perfect good action. . . . All this while the playhouse music improved yearly, and is now arrived to greater perfection, than ever I knew it."

Thus the servant already encroached upon the master's province. The poet, eclipsed by the actor, the carpenter, and the musician, saw his supremacy threatened. The less a limb is used, the weaker it becomes; and when once it was discovered that the actor might be a match for the arrogant poet, the poet began to understand that the stage was not for him. He declined the unequal combat, and appealed not to the theatre but to the study.

Actor and author.

Now, Mr James Wright, the honest barrister-at-law, to whom we owe the 'Historia Histrionica,' himself recognised the consequences of innovation. "For all these advantages," says he, "the reputation of the stage, and people's affection to it, are much decay'd." The actor had come into his

own, and meant to keep it. Colley Cibber, for instance, fought for profit and admiration like a bravo. He cared not a jot for authors or colleagues. He tinkered Shakespeare, he "choked the singing birds," and when he played Congreve or Vanbrugh he was convinced that Colley—and not the wit of the playwright—took the town. He saw the salaries increase and was content. So the general excellence of a performance presently surrendered to the advancement of the popular actor: in brief, the follies which have ruined the theatre of to-day were already triumphant. Henceforth the story of the stage is a story of vanity. The theatrical memoirs are packed with the details of childish squabbles and waspish depreciation. No sooner did the actors claim a share in management than intrigue usurped the throne of justice, and art was cheerfully subordinated to interest. Garrick, Quin, Macklin, Foote carried on the tradition of Colley Cibber. They were witty, ingenious, and always selfish. They prospered exceedingly, and thought so little of their trade that they cared not what became of it when they were gone. "Managing actors," says Garrick's biographer, "have often been upbraided with the neglect of encouraging young theatrical merit, and for not raising up geniuses for the stage." Nor have they ever troubled to answer the upbraiding voice. Why should they help others up the narrow path of eminence, where there is never room for two to walk abreast? In their wisdom they preferred to stand alone upon as dizzy a height as they could reach, and to leave to the future its own hazard.

And though the history of the stage thus early became the history of the player, the author of the eighteenth century had not wholly lost his influence. Now and again he was permitted to enjoy a furtive success, when his master the player saw that the popular breeze was set towards him. Moreover, the player could still permit himself a trifling generosity, as he had not yet to face

the fierce rivalry of the stage-carpenter, nor did he then aspire to rule the world. He was content with his limited conquest of the playhouse, where he lived among his kind with whatever amity was suitable to his temperament. So the theatre flourished and declined by turns. Now it shone, illumined by the genius of Siddons or of Kean; now it fell into the shadow of dulness. And then a second disaster fell upon it. Charles Kean "hung it on a clothes' peg," and the property man fought for victory with the carpenter. In the struggle, the real purpose of the stage was forgotten a second time. Shakespeare became a mere excuse for parade, and no new author had a chance of success who did not accommodate his talent to the "genius" of the latest sovereign.

The actor's victory.

At the outset, then, the actor was paid by the theatre to perform a certain task; now he hires the author to fit him with a part. It is a strange reversal of the *rôles*, and it explains the dire malady which has long beset our playhouses. What man of letters would accept the new conditions, and see his work cut and slashed to suit the interpreter? What would the painter say if his frame-maker and colourman signed his canvas, and assumed the glory of his work? Would the very *minimus* among the poets permit the printer and papermaker to "create" his poems, and set their names upon his title-page? Of course neither the painter nor the poet would submit to so monstrous an outrage, and as no playwright can hope for success who does not obey the actor, so the making of plays has fallen out of distinguished hands and is picked up by the odd cobblers and patchers, who are supposed to entertain us.

And what is the modern actor, whom we have won in exchange for the vanished poet? He is distinguished from the ancient by a gentlemanly incompetence. He has had little chance of learning his profession, for if he has been fortunate he has played but a dozen parts

in a dozen years. He is educated as often as not, and his manners off the stage are said to be irreproachable. In fact, he has been told by the tongue of flattery that he has but to stride the stage as a drawing-room and his elegance will be patent to all, and so forgets that a gentleman can only be represented on the stage by a liberal translation of manner, gesture, and voice. He has never worked, and it is not altogether his fault. Long runs and railway-trains have extinguished the old stock companies. The provincial towns wonder at the same cultured mummers who bore the audiences of London, and the aspirant can no longer hope to gain experience in the country. Hart and Mohun, says Colley Cibber, grew up into fine actors because they were apprenticed early, the one to the Blackfriars, the other to the Cockpit. Cibber himself played whatever he was bid for no salary, until Betterton gave him ten shillings a-week that he might fine him a crown. But these apprentices learned their trade: they studied a part in twenty-four hours, and did not kill it by rehearsal. The stock companies still gave the old training in the old fashion, as half-a-dozen living actors who have not usurped the realm of management remain to prove. Mr Benson has admirably contrasted the two schools in his article on a "National Theatre." On the one hand is Mr Vezin's aspirant, who spent one half of his time proclaiming his talents and the other half in thanking God that he did not need them. On the other hand you find an "old blue-chin," who says of this same aspirant, "Too good to be an actor! Let him study hard for seven years and then pray hard for another seven that the Lord will make him good enough to be an actor!"

So it was that, until the rough old companies were dissolved, there remained actors and actresses who knew their business despite the vanity of actor-managers. In Mr Benson's phrase, "They resented being called artists;

it savoured to them of cant. They were bread-and-butter actors, not crutch-and-toothpick toffs;" and however much their masters might intrigue and prosper, they learned their trade in hard simplicity. And they are gone into the night, leaving behind them nothing but the gentry, who have been mayhap to a university, or cultivated a specious accent in the drawing-rooms of "society." Yet their incompetence only increases their pride. Said one the other day: "You must not blame us for advertising ourselves and our private affairs. The only fame we enjoy comes to us in our lifetime." Was ever such an excuse contrived? Does the actor really confuse fame with notoriety? Indeed we would shield even the actor from the prying eye of the journalist; and he turns upon his friends, and implores that this last indiscretion be permitted him. It is an amusing commentary upon the stage, and well may we ask if we got the best of the bargain when we exchanged the dramatist for the *cabotin*.

The player of to-day.

But the pompous actor, who, with his vain desire to be pointed at with the finger, strides the Strand like a conqueror, is not the sole ruin of the stage. When, the author having fallen into disrepute, the actor also began to pall upon the people's palate, he encouraged, in defence of his own enterprise, the scenic artist. Sir William Davenant, in the moment of his extremest fantasy, never dreamed what the stage-carpenter might one day achieve. For the stage-carpenter has proved a worse enemy of the theatre, if it be possible, than the actor. The actor may mouth and strut under the limelight, he may cut down all the other parts until they are inarticulate, he may so bluntly insult the general effect as to surround himself with incompetent supporters; but not even he, with all his whimsical extravagance and superfine egoism, can smother the stage as wofully as the carpenter and upholsterer. For

the carpenter and upholsterer destroy the very essence of the theatre, which is illusion. The city of make-believe should not be built of brick and stone. A world that knows no sky, and is bounded abruptly by a cloth on one side and by the footlights on another, tumbles to pieces at the mere touch of realism. There is but one possibility of dramatic illusion—the consistent and harmonious suppression of reality. The actor upon the stage is not a real king; he can do no more than suggest some monarch of the past. Why, then, should he sit upon a real throne, or wear upon his head a veritable crown? Canvas should be his only background; the chairs and tables necessary for the performance should be of the simplest; and where they are merely displayed they should be painted on the scene. For if solidity invade the stage, if heavily built sets rumble between the acts, if costumes and upholstery be genuine and of the period, then reality must be carried a step further. Ophelia must be actually drowned, the cup must contain real poison, and Hamlet's blood must flow hot from the actor's veins. But logic is not studied in the theatre, and true realism would bring its professors within the eye of the law.

The absurdity of realism.

Yet how many absurdities has the stage revealed during the last decade! We have heard real horses clattering over boards with their real hoofs. We have seen a sham jockey chucked into a sham water-jump from the back of a real winner of the Grand National. We have heard the ripple of a rivulet flowing through the forest of Arden—a rivulet of the Company's water, which traced its source to the nearest tap. We have seen primroses and violets, fresh from Covent Garden, pretending that they had struck their roots into the hard floor of the stage. And the actors never see the incongruity. They believe they are intensifying the illusion, and all the while they are but exposing the

hollowness of their art. It is the business of the theatre to represent, not to present; and the stage-manager who thinks that "a real donkey means real dramatic art" is as foolish as a painter would be who, having painted a portrait, pasted a real silk hat upon the canvas. But realism is not the only sin committed in the name of that absurd business called *mise-en-scène.* Archæology, invented by Charles Kean, is nowadays more pompously extolled than any other artifice. So Shakespeare is tricked out with a pedantry alien to his genius; and the pit, which knows nothing of history or of costume, exclaims upon the accuracy of the trappings. Hamlet, a Briton of Shakespeare's age, is bidden to masquerade as a Dane. The fauna and flora (so to speak) of Elsinore are thrust upon the English stage; actors wander into the land of the Vikings, and the Prince, who from his surroundings should wield a battle-axe, cuts the air with a rapier. And then, that Shakespeare may appear more natural, crowds are drilled. Two boys, with their legs painted brown, wrestle on the stage; or lovers interrupt the action with their silent blandishments. Then a pause: the great man enters, the crowd is frozen to immobility, and the text of Shakespeare is not spoken, but interpreted (or created) with nods, winks, and jerks of the elbow. Nothing is achieved simply. A perpetual commentary of crowd, speech, or gesture converts the best play into a sort of pantomime. And the actor is no longer all-sufficient: as we have seen, he killed the dramatist long since, and it is only because he is his own manager that he has not already surrendered to the stage-carpenter. But when once he lets go his supremacy he will have a short shrift. For the upholsterer is to-day the essential artist of the stage, and he will esteem the actor no more highly than the actor esteemed the dramatist. Thus the balance is overturned, and the three elements which we have named pitifully confused. No longer

are action and ornament the handmaidens of poetry. Poetry is a poor excuse for false splendour, and action—in its own belief the foremost of the arts—is made ridiculous by vanity.

The reform of the stage.

That the stage needs reform, then, is obvious. Can the stage be reformed? Perhaps, by the establishment of a National Theatre, and a National Theatre can be established only by one method—the suppression of the actor and the upholsterer. If our theatre is to survive as an intelligent resort, the modern fashions of acting, managing, and decorating must be swept away. So long as art is sacrificed to vulgar display, the quality of the drama is immaterial. But even from an economic point of view, a complete change must precede the establishment of a National Theatre. The enormous salaries paid to the great actors and actresses, who permit no rival star in their firmament, have made it wellnigh impossible to collect an efficient company, and an efficient company would be a necessity of a National Theatre. Again, the extravagance of the upholsterer has made long runs inevitable. When it costs many thousands of pounds to decorate a play, no manager will withdraw that play until he is compelled by the public taste. Therefore, from a National Theatre, if such an institution be possible, costly decoration must be banished, that the programme may be constantly changed and the actors perfect their talent by a quick succession of *rôles*.

For many centuries Europe has had before its eyes the perfect type of the subventioned theatre. The Théâtre Français is, in constitution and achievement alike, a veritable palace of its art. It is a school at once of acting and of the drama; its repertory includes the masterpieces of dramatic literature, and a daily change of cast and play preserve both actors and public from weariness. Above all, it holds in trust a sacred tradition. The method of Molière is still reverenced, and

no actor may pass the stately portals unless he has conquered his craft, can speak and walk, and is willing to subordinate his vanity to the common good. Thus the torch is handed down continuously through the ages; the veteran imparts his knowledge to the student at the Conservatoire; and the boards of the Théâtre Français are never trodden by the gentlemanly amateur. But at the Français two qualities are imposed upon the actor—discipline and contentment. A *sociétaire* of the House of Molière must be content with a salary at which an English actor would look with disdain, and he must obey with a cheerful mind the voice of discipline. He must not think, even when he has reached the top of his profession, that the whole stage is his pitch, where presently, with limelight on his brow, he will execute his own little song and dance. He must bow to the voice of his director; he must esteem the opinion of his *confrères;* above all, he must act within the picture, and speak the same language as those around him.

The Théâtre Français in London.

Now, if private munificence established a theatre in London, composed and managed like the Théâtre Français, what would be the result? Our actors would disdain it. So long have they been pampered with wealth and flattery that they have quite forgotten the exigence of their art. Would they be content to play many parts for a salary, say, of £800 a-year? Of course they would not, and we do not see precisely why they should. And would they, who had long been accustomed to rule, listen to the commands of an autocratic manager? No, the British actor forgot discipline two centuries ago, and he would think his profession of no account if he might not order the limelight for himself. Moreover, the British actor would not have the same inducement to join a National Theatre as impels the French actor to enter the Théâtre Français. A newly subventioned theatre could not have the prestige which sets the House of Molière

high above all competitors. To belong to an august foundation may compensate even for poverty; and though a National Theatre, established in London, might in years to come attract the finest talent, it would be forced to depend at the outset on the energies of the young, to encourage the aspirations of the inexperienced.

Yet this compulsion would not be deplorable. The older actors might be left to their cumbrous furniture and their vainglorious advertisement. The National Theatre should be an autocracy, which brooked no interference. But while the staff of actors and actresses should be the servants of the management, it might, as in Paris, have a vote in the choice of plays. The theatre should be governed by a man of letters, who had no plays of his own to push. He should enrol an ample company, and compose the best repertory that could be found. The theatre should be a school as well as a stage, and there the young actors, upon whom the manager relied, should be trained and instructed. They should be adequately, though not extravagantly, paid, and the abolition of stars, with the suppression of archæological scenery, would make a large and varied company possible. The repertory might be easily composed. Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, Congreve and Vanbrugh, Sheridan and Goldsmith, would make the nucleus. Racine and Molière might be translated. All modern plays, whether English or French, might be loyally considered, and all playwrights whose eye looked higher than a long run would have their chance of distinction. The scenery, simple, elegant, and conventional, would cost little, and yet be perfectly appropriate. Thus in years to come a standard of acting might be established. No longer would a popular critic be able to declare that great actors in England "were never remarkable for elocutionary eloquence." The men and women who took service in our National Theatre would

learn the necessary rudiments; they would speak with precision, and they would walk with grace. But they would recite the lines of Shakespeare, for instance, with a quiet simplicity. They would not be allowed to twist meanings of their own into the masterpieces of the past. And thus England might at last achieve a playhouse that was neither farcical nor fantastic, in which the actor was the servant, not the master, and in which intelligent men and women might sit without disgust.

Will England ever achieve this theatre? We are not sanguine. Destiny and experience are against us, and the people long ago ceased to chafe at the domination of the actor. Doubtless much will be said of a National Theatre, and nothing will be done. But in the meantime an American trust may purchase all our playhouses, and fill them with the particular brand of musical comedy popular in New York. And, after all, it does not matter very much, since the theatre, which might be the home of a beautiful and delicate art, is generally nothing more than the vulgar scene of "pleasures taken in common." England has had her chance and sacrificed it, and the most interesting problem still unsolved is how long the actor will hold out victorious against the spirited attack of the stage-carpenter.

M. Maeterlinck on the Bee.

Where the material of an art has triumphed over its essence, the gossamer web of fancy is rudely shattered, and nothing is more certain than that the shadowy inventions of M. Maeterlinck, for instance, can have no place upon the stage. No one is more conscious of this limitation than M. Maeterlinck himself, and when he declared that he composed some of his dramas for marionettes, he pronounced a sentence of condemnation upon the modern theatre. In truth, his plays, simple experiments as they are in folk-lore, cannot but lose their delicacy in the interpretation of actors, and for this reason whatever

success he has captured has been a success of what the French call *snobisme.* And no sooner did he capture this success than he was generously misunderstood. He was covered with labels, symbolist, mystic, and what not. Little circles of intense persons swooned over him and all his works, and while they acknowledged him a prophet, they forgot that he was a man of letters. Now, M. Maeterlinck has never been concerned to astonish the Philistines. He has merely cultivated a curious gift of fancy, with all the skill which sincerity imparts to talent. He has seen the world through spectacles simple as Hans Andersen's. He has put beyond his contemplation the common sights and sounds of to-day; he has ousted experience by imagination. But he has never earned the opprobrium of foolish names, nor justified the folly of indiscreet worshippers. And his last book, 'The Life of the Bee,'[1] is so far from being curious or fantastic that it is a real classic. It is very seldom that we find a masterpiece in the jumble of modern books, and we welcome the more gladly this amiable treatise. Of course it will be pronounced an experiment in symbolism, and of course it is nothing of the kind. It is merely what it purports to be—an essay on the life of the bee, an essay such as Virgil might have written had he possessed the fulness of modern knowledge.

And M. Maeterlinck has prepared himself for his task by many years of study. He has watched his hives for twenty years, and, aided by an incomparable gift of exposition, he is able to put before his readers the strange tragedy of love and work, of death and change, which is the life of the bee. His book, written with a simple eloquence, and rendered the more mysterious by the constant hiatus of science, recalls no book so closely as Mr Frazer's 'Golden Bough.' The lover of the

[1] The Life of the Bee. By Maurice Maeterlinck. Translated by A. Sutro. London: George Allen.

Queen, who sacrifices himself for the race, and dies in the fulfilment of his destiny, claims a distant kinship to the priest of Nemi; while the Spirit of the Hive, which no observation can surprise, suggests to our mind the Spirit of the Grove. Both the one and the other are lost in uncertainty. M. Maeterlinck, having followed his inquiry after the true method of science, frankly confesses his ignorance; and Mr Frazer, after years of patient research, rather states than solves his problem. And yet, as we read M. Maeterlinck's treatise we could not but think that human folk-lore might be ingeniously paralleled by the experience of the bee, and that, if we appear to know more of the hive than of ourselves, it is because we see the hive in a truer perspective. We are yet so near to ourselves that we judge our own trials and ingenuities piecemeal, but we can watch the bees through a tell-tale glass; we can note their progress from the foundation of the hive to the massacre of the males, and though we cannot understand all that we see, we may mark the order and progress of events.

The drama of the hive.

And what strange personages take part in the drama! First of all, there is the Queen, whose work the City is, who is the City. "She is the unique organ of love," says M. Maeterlinck; "she is the mother of the City. She founded it amid uncertainty and poverty. She has peopled it with her own substance; and all who move within its walls—workers, males, larvæ, nymphs, and the young princesses, whose approaching birth will hasten her own departure, one of them being already designed as her successor by the spirit of the hive—all have issued from her flanks." Such is the Queen, who is wooed and won in the lofty air, under the blue of heaven—won by the lover whose wing soars highest, and who dies miserably in the moment of conquest. But the Queen is herself obedient to the "spirit of the hive"—that spirit which bids the

bees desert their kingdom, not in a moment of despair, but in efflorescence. They desert it not because they need, but because they are bidden. Were they poor or unhappy, they would stay to rebuild their fortune. Were they attacked, they would repel the invader with exemplary courage. But the spirit of the hive bids them depart, and they leave their home at the apogee of its prosperity; they leave it "at a time when, after the arduous labours of the spring, the immense palace of wax has its 120,000 well-arranged cells overflowing with new honey, and with the many-coloured flour, known as 'bees' bread,' on which the nymphs and larvæ are fed." In truth, the god of the bees is the future, and they obey their own mysterious laws with a patience and discretion which man cannot understand.

M. Maeterlinck has studied the hive from every point of view. He tells us how their lateral eyes have six or seven thousand facets; he explains to us their music—"the ode of the Queen, the songs of abundance, the psalms of grief, and lastly, the long and mysterious war-cries the adolescent princesses send forth during the combats and massacres which precede the nuptial flight." He assures us that they have in their midst chemists, capsulemakers, sweepers, and amazons of the guard. They are fearless, we are told, admirable in the art of sculpture, and peerless in the difficult science of finding their way. For their own fatality, they are willing to make the highest sacrifices; and well may M. Maeterlinck ask, "What far-seeing fatality, taking the place of this one, do we obey?" And worthily he answers, "We know not, as we know not the being who watches us as we watch the bees." But who shall unravel the mystery of the drones, of the miserable males "who comport themselves in the hive as did Penelope's suitors in the house of Ulysses"? The account which M. Maeterlinck gives of them is grotesque indeed. "Indelicate and wasteful," says he, "sleek and corpulent,

fully content with their idle existence as honorary lovers, they feast and carouse, throng the alleys, obstruct the passages, and hinder the work; jostling and jostled, fatuously pompous, swelled with foolish good-natured contempt; harbouring never a suspicion of the deep and calculating scorn wherewith the workers regard them, of the constantly growing hatred to which they give rise, or the destiny that awaits them." That destiny is grim enough. "Suddenly the workers arise and execute vengeance. They fall upon the drunken lazy drones. They saw off their wings, they amputate their antennæ, and seek the rings of their cuirass, through which their sword gives the *coup-de-grâce*." Romantic and inexplicable as is this life, M. Maeterlinck has described it in a sort of epic, which all who are interested either in natural history or in prose will read with pleasure. We have praised his style, and in justification we will quote a passage, chosen at random.

"I have not forgotten," says M. Maeterlinck, "the first apiary I saw, where I learned to love the bees. It was many years ago in a large village of Dutch Flanders, the sweet and pleasant country, whose love for brilliant colour rivals that of Zealand even; the concave mirror of Holland, a country that gladly spreads out before us, as so many pretty, thoughtful toys, her illuminated gables, and waggons and towers; her cupboards and clocks that gleam at the end of the passage; her little trees marshalled in line along quays and canal-banks, waiting, one almost might think, for some quiet, beneficent ceremony; her boats and her barges with sculptured poops, her flower-like doors and windows, immaculate dams and elaborate, many-coloured drawbridges; and her little varnished houses, bright as new pottery, from which bell-shaped dames come forth, all a-glitter with silver and gold, to milk the cows in the white-hedged fields or spread the linen on flowery lawns, cut into patterns of oval and lozenge, and most astoundingly green."

With such a book as this we may console ourselves for the decay of the theatre, in whose turgid atmosphere its flowers of speech and leaves of thought would most assuredly shrivel up and die.

JULY.

THE cordial reception of Lord Milner has dispelled the fog of falsehood and invention. No more is said of dismissal. The most hopeful of the pro-Boers have ceased to chatter of an honourable degradation to a higher post, while the Peerage conferred upon the High Commissioner is a symbol of the trust reposed in him by the King, the Parliament, and the people. For once, at any rate, the English Government will support its chosen servant in loyal confidence. But while one falsehood is exposed, the detractors are as busy as ever. The return of Lord Milner being assured, they take refuge in other lies, and when lies fail them, there is always the simple expedient of vituperation. The High Commissioner is assailed day by day with an hysterical virulence, which is the highest certificate of honourable conduct. The Radicals have always reserved for unselfish and patriotic statesmen the rankest flowers of their rhetorical abuse, and it need not be said that Lord Milner has most happily inspired them. One paper there is, whose leader-writers need not have penned a single fresh article: they had but to change the name, and the libels, consecrated to Sir Bartle Frere twenty years ago, would have suited the case of Lord Milner. "The enthusiasm which is felt for the High Commissioner is only too easily intelligible. He has allied himself with the worst passions and sinister motives of the colonists—their fear and hate of a race outnumbering their own; their desire for conquest and

Lord Milner and the Country.

spoil, for the subjugation of their enemies, with the view of annexing their territory; and their disposition to sponge on the Empire, to prosecute their own gain at the cost of the mother country," &c., &c. Might not these words be written to-day as the Radicals' welcome to Lord Milner?

Well, they were the tribute once paid to Sir Bartle Frere, and their falsehood was long since demonstrated by history. But unhappily for their own intelligence, the Radicals opposed Sir Bartle, because he would not permit the Zulus to destroy the white population, Boer and English alike. To-day the same Radicals, in the same empty press, with the same meaningless anger, attack Lord Milner, because he would restrain the Boers from flogging their friends of twenty years ago. Thus they have done violence to all their principles save one. Radicals, they applaud corrupt monopolies; despite their pretended jealousy of popular rights, they have chosen for their hero a narrow oligarch; the champions of liberty, they are on the side of those who deem slavery a natural right. Yet one principle they never violate: they are constant in the hatred they bear to their country. No sooner is an attack made upon England than the Radical finds a fresh friend. He is prepared to forget his principles at a moment's warning, and for Kruger's sake he willingly denounces an extended franchise as the instrument of tyranny. Now, the politician of this sort is bitten by words, as by gadflies; he is stung to fury by a phrase, and knowing naught of the antidote of facts, he lets the poison course idly through his swollen veins. He proudly calls himself a "man of ideas," because he is quick at borrowed formulæ, and he is as careless about the consequence of his phrases as were the revolutionaries of 1793, who believed that all heads fell justly, if they fell to the murmur of *égalité*, or as are the anarchists of to-day, who justify dynamite or the knife by a tag from Darwin.

Behind the flood of words poured forth by the enemies of their country, there is, then, neither thought nor knowledge, and the false phrases of twenty years ago are no more and no less appropriate than those more recently coined. But one charge has been brought against Lord Milner which we believe Sir Bartle Frere escaped. It has been thrown in the High Commissioner's teeth that he is "one-sided"; and truly he is "one-sided," if it be "one-sided" to support his country's cause. With whom, indeed, should a high official sympathise if not with the country whose cause he is sent to advocate? And the grotesqueness of this charge is the best proof of Radical frivolity. No doubt if the moribund party of Mr John Morley had been permitted to settle the Boer question, the last demands of Mr Kruger would have been granted to-day, as they were granted in 1881, when the murderers of Englishmen either were not tried at all, or were brought before such tribunals as assured their acquittal. But Mr John Morley is not likely to be admitted to the councils of the nation for many years to come, and his speeches cannot have any other than an academic interest. Yet it is curious to note that the party which purports to be led by the biographer of Cromwell would have Lord Milner recalled in disgrace because he is not the favourite of General Botha; nor have vanity and a hopeful temperament ever carried politicians farther along the road of concession. A conquered foe, in their opinion, has not only the right to impose terms upon the victor; he has also the right to cancel any appointment which is displeasing to him. Thus if the French in 1759 had demanded the degradation of Pitt, or if Napoleon had suggested the suppression of Nelson and Wellington, the Radicals of the time would, we suppose, have been justified in a placid acquiescence.

The vituperation of the Press.

So much for the poisoned arrows which have been

directed at Lord Milner. They cannot touch him, because they are aimed by trembling hands far from the target. Moreover, it is clear that the British Government is prepared to support and protect its Commissioner. The confidence of the country is assured; and this is the most hopeful sign, for not only does Lord Milner deserve all our trust, but it shows that in the future a better system of government may prevail. Truly, Lord Milner is a public servant of whom any nation might be proud. Trained in the best traditions, he played his part in the regeneration of Egypt, whose solvency is due in no small measure to his loyal co-operation. Yet whatever may have been his position before he accepted the difficult post of High Commissioner, he has enormously enhanced it since the Bloemfontein Conference. That the Boers should dislike him is natural, since he resolutely refused to be hoodwinked by the conditional promises of Paul Kruger. There was only one possible method of securing protection for "a large, wealthy, and industrious community of white men," long subjected to insult and aggression, and that method was a liberal franchise. This method, which even our amicable cannibals might describe as moderate, was declined by the Boers, although, as Lord Milner declared, "the policy of her Majesty's Government had been one of singular patience."

The support of the Government.

"It seemed best," said the High Commissioner, "to strike straight at the root of the evil by giving the people whose interest her Majesty's Government is bound to defend such a share of political power as would enable them gradually to redress those grievances themselves, and to strengthen, not to weaken, the country of their adoption in the process. But just because I was relying on a single remedy, it was absolutely essential that that remedy should be a radical one. It was useless, indeed, worse than useless, and would only have led to worse trouble later on, to have accepted a scheme so framed—I do not say so designed—as not to bring people in,

but to keep them out; a scheme hedged in with restrictions of the most elaborate kind, and hampered with a condition which I knew that numbers of people would never accept, and which one could not reasonably urge them to accept."

Could any pronouncement be more moderate than that? It was the bounden duty of the High Commissioner and of England to protect Britons against the insults and injuries daily put upon them. Yet so desirous was Lord Milner of a pacific solution that he would have accepted on behalf of his countrymen such a franchise as is granted elsewhere without exaction. Indeed, the quality which shines most strongly in Lord Milner's speeches and despatches is an amiable moderation; nor did he recommend "prompt and decided action" until he saw—and none had a better opportunity of vision—that the negotiations had been contrived for failure from the first. But for so many years have the Boers been used to the tergiversation of English Ministers, that perhaps they did not believe in Lord Milner's resolution. Educated in the Gladstonian principle of government, that it is always right for Englishmen to give away what does not belong to them, the friends of Kruger thought that if the screw were turned tight enough they might still pursue their policy of monopoly and intimidation. But at last there came a Minister who, with the support of his Government, declared that Englishmen should not be degraded to the state of helots, and who, when peace was insolently refused, did not shrink from the last sacrifice of war. For this he is called "the author of anarchy" and the enemy of his country by Mr Frederic Harrison. The compliment is delicately paid and well deserved. It is a distinction, indeed, to incur the hatred of an hysterical Positivist, who has spoken much in his life of "scientific" thought, and has so heedlessly lost the sense of words that he writes like a larrikin.

But while we congratulate Lord Milner on gaining

the public confidence, which is his due, we congratulate ourselves as heartily upon this admirable trust. For in the support of our High Commissioner a sound and serious principle is involved. If the British Empire is not to perish in the triumph of Little Englandism, the empire's responsible officials must be loyally respected. When once a Government has made an appointment it must support its action. Authority must be delegated, or our empire will crumble away in ignorance and forgetfulness. The most brilliant Minister cannot know all things, and he can only be brilliantly served on one condition — that he believes in the intelligence of his servants. If a governor be no more than a transmitter of telegrams, if opinions securely formed upon the spot may be revised by the prejudices of Downing Street or the exigencies of the polling-booth, then the Government must be content with the services of the second-rate. And as the science of government is empirical at the best, it is most necessary that our Ministers should be well informed at home and ably served abroad.

The history of South Africa.

The history of South Africa is a history of wilful ignorance and blank distrust. Ministers of either side have treated what may be our richest province with a reckless contempt. They have appointed governors and recalled them with a levity which it is not pleasant to contemplate; and they have traitorously thrown overboard the most faithful servants, that the ship of party might lighten its load. When we contrast the treatment meted out to Lord Milner with the insults put upon Sir Bartle Frere, we may take a just pride in our newer method of politics. For, in truth, the sacrifice of Sir Bartle Frere is among the most painful episodes of our history: it was not merely a patent disloyalty to a great public servant, but it involved the country in an endless waste of life and gold. All that we have endured since of insolence and warfare was foreseen by Sir Bartle, and

might have been prevented. But the home Government knew but little of Africa, and was so busy opposing the stampedes of Mr Gladstone, that it faced colonial questions with a lamentable apathy. Now, Frere had gone to Africa at the earnest request of the Government; he had been implored to achieve the federation of our African colonies. It was a delicate task, which could only be performed by a statesman who had the perfect trust and support of his countrymen. Yet no sooner did an election seem imminent than Sir Bartle was made the victim of popular clamour. The insolence of the Radical press, directed against a man who preferred action to formulæ, was quite proper and never unexpected. But Sir Michael Hicks Beach at any rate might have refused to bend to the storm.

The sacrifice of Sir Bartle Frere.

However, the battle of Isandhlwana seemed at home a monstrous disaster, and many who knew naught of the policy which Frere had initiated saw in the battle nothing save a reckless waste of life. A majority of the Cabinet detected a definite profit to themselves in a censure of their Commissioner, and though Lord Beaconsfield supported Frere with his great influence, he could arrive at nothing better than a compromise. Frere was publicly censured, and implored in the same breath not to desert his post. For sheer cowardice it would be difficult to match this conduct, and the correspondence between Frere and his persecutors is not pleasant reading. Even when Frere defended himself in an admirable despatch, the Colonial Minister grumbled, and did not understand why Frere should take notice of any attacks. Sir Bartle's answer is dignified and conclusive. "Your warning is a kind one," he wrote, "'Why raise a fresh storm by replying to the Opposition?' Simply because, finding no complete and formal reply had been made to them, I wish to place one on record." The reproof, so lightly given, was heavy enough to inflict

a wound upon the most complacent of Ministers, yet the Government, always protesting complete confidence in Frere, were as yet on the threshold of disloyalty.

Before the censure was published, Frere had done much to win the help and sympathy of the Boers. Disgraced by his Government, he could not expect to retain the support of those cunning politicians. But the Colonial Minister was not yet satisfied with his work. Having already censured Frere, he thought it politic partially to supersede him. Accordingly Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent to replace him as High Commissioner of the Transvaal, Natal, and all the adjoining eastern portion of East Africa. The result of this divided control could have been easily foretold. The work, for whose accomplishment Frere had gone to Africa, became impossible. The Boers, alternately repressed and encouraged, patiently prepared Majuba, and when Sir George Colley took Sir Garnet's place, the worst was assured. Mr Gladstone went upon the stump, Mid-Lothian was aroused by his rhetorical falsehood, and the fate of Frere and South Africa was sealed. Who, indeed, could stand against such facile falsehood as the famous description of the Zulu war: "The record of ten thousand Zulus slain for no other offence than their attempt to defend against your artillery with their naked bodies their hearths and homes, their wives and families"? Mr Gladstone, of course, came into office, and the recall of Sir Bartle was a natural part of the Radical policy.

The Radical party has always been notorious for a callousness unknown even to the criminal classes, yet never was a more callous document penned than the petition addressed to Mr Gladstone urging Sir Bartle's recall. Not one word of this precious poltroonery should be lost, and we quote it word for word: "We, the undersigned, members of the Liberal party, respectfully submit that as there is a strong feeling throughout the

country in favour of the recall of Sir Bartle Frere, it would greatly conduce to the unity of the party, and relieve many members from the charge of breaking their pledges to their constituents, if that step were taken." Here, it will be noted, is no word of England or of Africa. The empire was nothing to these earnest Liberals compared to the Unity of the Party. Honour and justice were cheerfully sacrificed that members "might be relieved from the charge of breaking their pledges." Maybe they were relieved of this charge; they incurred another, from whose incubus they will never be free. The follies of party government generally hide themselves under a mask of patriotism. Here the mask is ruthlessly torn aside, and the unmasked politician confesses that the sky may fall, and justice with it, if only the Unity of the Liberal Party be assured.

Mr Gladstone's surrender.

Thus Sir Bartle Frere was sacrificed to the election pledge of Mr Leonard Courtney, and doubtless that eminent casuist is proud to have been saved from breaking a profitable promise. The way was made plain for Mr Gladstone's surrender, and a quarter of a century of strife was imposed upon the country. But the unity of the Liberal party has proved transient, and it may still be doubted whether so monstrous a disloyalty was repaid by the off-chance of preventing a quarrel between Sir William Harcourt (let us say) and Mr Campbell-Bannerman. However, the lesson of Sir Bartle's career has not been taught in vain. That injured statesman had no compensation save the certainty, often expressed, that time would prove the justice of his policy, and the proof is already conclusive. But the lesson has had a sternly practical result. For many years to come the Government will remember that it owes something to the servants who loyally fight its battles. While Sir Bartle suffered, Lord Milner is strengthened by the suffering of his predecessor; and the Government, which

supported him in the stress of the past, sends him back to Africa fortified against the attacks of traitors, and encouraged to undertake the more difficult task which lies before him.

The Bayard of the money-bag.

But all things, including politics, have been overshadowed of late by a new cult — the cult of the millionaire. In the worship of money even Lord Milner's prowess may be forgotten, and Mr Pierpont Morgan may appear more important than the settlement of the South African question. For there is no doubt that the millionaire has had what they call in France a *belle presse*. It is impossible to pick up a newspaper without finding therein eloquent descriptions of his splendid state. Now you are told how he has purchased himself a railway-car at the modest cost of £10,000, and your blood runs cold when you think of his vulgar orgie of marble and silver. Now, the gasping journalist tells you, with an air of panic-stricken awe, that on a certain occasion one simple roof was privileged to cover a dozen heroes, whose joint fortunes amounted to x millions. The poorest jest, made by a new-sewn money-bag, is printed with an exaggerated respect, and if the money-bag deigns to consider the arts, his taste is estimated not by its result but by the dollars which encourage it. In fact, the golden calf is set up, and the devout hustle about it with a frank and noisy reverence. It is not a noble spectacle, but it is universal; and the millionaire, who tears across the Atlantic to attend a dinner, appears to be the Bayard of the future.

The people has worshipped many false gods in the past, and much incense has been burned upon unworthy altars. Yet the glory of the millionaire is the loudest confession ever made that discrimination is dead. Once upon a time men were esteemed for courage, for virtue, for intellect, for prowess in the field of war or sport. Feu-

dalism, no doubt, had its hardships; but in spite of injustice it was the realisation of a generous dream. And when feudalism died with the gradual growth of new ideas, merit or tradition was still esteemed even by the humble. A man ruled his country because the associations of his birth or the elevation of his intellect made him fit for leadership. Riches availed him little enough in winning either the favour of a king or the support of the people. But the old ideals are dead or dying, and money seems to the idle mind of to-day the easiest method of differentiation. So we are confronted with a new heroism—the heroism of money-bags. He who has swept together the largest heap of rubble may easily be known for the greatest man; and since the value of dollars is not enhanced by judicious manners or wise distribution, the problem of merit is easily solved.

The new ruler of the world.

What is the millionaire, then, the new ruler of the world? If he constitute a class by himself, he may best be defined as a man of narrow intelligence, who has mistaken the means of life for the end. His wealth argues a wasted life—a youth spent in avarice, a manhood devoted to the vain collection of immaterial gold. For the millionaire piles up his millions, not for any pleasure they may afford him, but for the sheer joy which is confessed by a swollen balance. When he has got enough to amuse or instruct himself and his family he is not content. It is a point of honour with him to go on hoarding, hoarding. So he gathers sovereigns, or dollars, as the savage collects cowries, and he seldom remembers that wealth may buy happiness. The very conditions of his life ensure a sort of misery, since he cannot pause to laugh or to take breath. He who goes not forward must necessarily go back—so we have been told by an expert; and a fall in his profits too often suggests to the millionaire the cold walls of the poor-

house. So the poor fellow works and works, until no gift remains to him save the gift of Midas. Whatever he touches is transmuted to gold; but the gaiety, the interest, the taste which alone give a proper value to gold, are not his: he shivers in front of a hospitable fire; he starves at a well-laden table.

In truth, we might almost find it in our heart to pity him, did not his conscious arrogance render pity absurd, for his industry brings him few rewards, beyond the admiring fame of the daily paper. Of course he can purchase more champagne than his fellows; of course he can enlarge his racing-stable, until it includes all the horses not already purchased by rival millionaires. Of course, also, he may buy books, and pictures, and houses; but the excitement of the genuine collector is not for him. In the first place, a life spent in dollar-hunting is not the best training for the amateur; and in the second, the millionaire can if he choose, and he generally chooses, buy his collections ready-made. A book or a picture that has caused no sacrifice and entailed no forethought cannot have the same value as a book or a picture that has been feverishly watched and bought with coins that are hardly spared. And the millionaire can have so much that he never knows the full pleasure of possession. This conclusion, arrived at by first principles, is supported by eminent examples. An American has recently purchased a whole gallery of pictures, which, while they represent his dollars, represent somebody else's taste. Another can see no better use for his money than the acquisition of the stolen Gainsborough, whose curious career has wholly obscured its artistic insignificance. But though they spend vast sums of money, these millionaires cannot be called collectors; they are too busy to select, and the inevitable dispersal of their libraries and cabinets will cause us no regret. A millionaire might easily have bought the Ashburnham Library. But it would have still

remained the Ashburnham Library, however far it travelled, and whatever name was signed at the bottom of the cheque which paid for it.

An arrogant Mæcenas.

One wealthy manufacturer, however, has loyally supported his class, and has stated in print that the rich man is the first necessity of civilisation. "It is well, nay, essential," says Mr Carnegie, "for the progress of the race that the houses of some should be homes for all that is highest and best in literature and the arts. . . . Without wealth there can be no Mæcenas. The 'good old times' were not good old times." It would be impossible to crowd more fallacies into a single sentence. It is very well that there should be "homes" for the best in literature and the arts, yet the arts have not yet been driven to take asylum in the houses of millionaires, who are not always fitted by education and sentiment for the delicate office of patron. Again, it is quite true that "without wealth there can be no Mæcenas." But the good old times were so very good, that Mæcenas belonged to them, and that with their decay the dignified system of patronage died also. A poet could accept the protection of a great house or of a distinguished Minister without losing his esteem or hurting his pride. And in "the good old days" the relation of patron to poet was perfectly well understood. But no poet would choose to be patronised by the head of a trust, and all the wealth of all the millionaires will never achieve so much for literature as was achieved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the slender competence of an English noble. Finished steel may be sold in America for two cents a pound—this at least has been accomplished by the wealthy merchants. Yet many a trust will be dissolved in penury before the iron mines of the New World produce a single Mæcenas.

For Mæcenas was descended, as we learned at school, *regibus atavis*, and the habit of a lifetime, inspired by a

line of kings, enabled him to claim Horace for his friend. And there is this further difference between the "good old times" and to-day, which the millionaires are apt to overlook: in the good old times wealth carried with it a heavy responsibility. The ancient Roman or feudal lord accepted with his lands a solemn trust. He was the father of his people; he was the captain of soldiers, whom he equipped to fight for his king and country. So that there was always a dignified charge upon his property, which he could neither sell nor give away. His house was at once a stronghold and a refuge: while he protected his tenants and servants against attack, he opened his door to honoured merit. Those who accepted his patronage took what was theirs by right of custom, and he received the adulation of poets in the proper spirit of smiling appreciation. But long ago industrialism rudely interrupted this Arcadian life, and, instead of "the good old times," we are witnesses to-day of wealth without responsibility, of philanthropy without control.

When, therefore, a millionaire tells us that money may make a Mæcenas, he gravely misrepresents the duty of a patron, and shows himself deficient in the sense of humour. But humour is the quality which millionaires most conspicuously lack. Worse than all, they are wont to take themselves mighty seriously, and to believe that they hold their money in trust to some unseen power—to the spirit of wealth perhaps. The very best of them have a touch of Trimalchio in their nature. Of course they could not rise to Trimalchio's height and ask, What is a poor man? But they verily believe that a poor man is fashioned of another clay than that fine substance of which they are made. They look about them and recognise that millionaires are not very common in the world. And this rarity persuades them that wealth is an almost holy endowment. But they forget that it is as often lack of will as lack of ability which keeps men from

amassing large fortunes. There are other, and more profitable, methods of spending the time than collecting pieces of gold, nor can we believe that the ability necessary to piling up money is of the highest kind. Temperament, of course, counts for much. The hawk is proud of his beak, as the nightingale of his song. And it would be unreasonable to expect modesty in a millionaire, who believes, no doubt, that the stronger the claw the better the man. At any rate, this belief helps to explain the serious view which the rich man takes of himself and of his mission. For now and again he claims to have a mission, and it is then that he becomes a danger to the State.

The danger of philanthropy.

For the millionaire does not hesitate to benefit his fellow-men; and in his worst incarnation he thinks that he has a right to offer the people the last insult by way of gift. But philanthropy, when it is not supported by an unselfish intelligence, is an unmixed evil, which should be regarded with a scrupulous suspicion. The first duty of the community is to look every gift-horse in the mouth: a millionaire may present a million which he will not miss in all levity of heart, and the harm may be done before the consequences are perceived. That a private citizen should have thought it possible even for a moment to free the education of a great country should awaken us to the perils of benevolence. Mr Carnegie is, we believe, a firm opponent of Socialism, yet the accident of wealth might have enabled him to achieve the worst results of a system which he despises. If it be wrong to accept aid from the Government, it is wrong also to accept that aid from a private philanthropist; indeed, we would always rather be beholden to the State than to the generosity of a wealthy citizen. But happily the mouth of Mr Carnegie's gift-horse has been thoroughly examined, and a vast sum of money may perhaps be

spent wisely upon Scottish education. Yet because the trustees in whom the money is vested are likely to administer it well, we need not forget Scotland's narrow escape from pauperisation. To grant a university education free to all comers was a scheme not only impracticable but perilous. Privileges that cost nothing are little worth, and Scotland is strong among the nations because she has won the advantages of education by strength of character and the sacrifice of self. However, it remains with the trustees to formulate a scheme, and the public right of criticising a gift is amply vindicated.

Pecunia olet.

But there is another reason why money should not be accepted without examination. As often as not it is not too honourably come by. *Pecunia non olet*, says the old proverb, and nothing could be falser. Money never loses its scent. We should be very sorry if the rook were permitted first of all to pluck the pigeon and then to comfort his disfeathered frame with a pension. Nor are the new methods such as to inspire us with confidence. Once upon a time the marauder went upon the pad, and levied his tax upon the stage-coach. Now he goes into the city and sits upon the board of bogus companies. The greed of the pigeon, who, wishing to gain cent per cent without risk, deserves no pity, is well matched by the cunning of the rook; and the rook, when his competence is assured, seeks to buy respectability with a subscription. But the community should so jealously guard its independence as to reject this specious bargain. No nation needs the help of the bogus-company promoter, or of the monstrous speculator who, to corner corn, imposes a famine upon a harmless population, and who condemns his compatriots to thirst by sending up the price of ice. After all, the indiscriminate collection of sovereigns is not in itself a virtuous action, and while

the popular admiration of millionaires is merely an expression of vulgarity, the ready acceptance of their doles might prove a national disgrace. Not all who have may give, and the rare privilege of generosity, assumed in fear, should be exercised with all the carefulness of a humble spirit.

AUGUST.

The mad race run across Europe in automobiles illustrates, with a naked candour, the new worship of speed. From Paris to Berlin panted a mob of mechanical enthusiasts, who cared neither for human life nor human comfort so long as they cut a record on the highway. Here a child was killed, there an aged couple was disabled, and a sentimental press made light of these accidents because it believes that the salvation of man lies in haste. Seventy-five miles an hour on the open road! How glorious an achievement! Is not that country happy which can produce a citizen hardy enough to stand the dust and the racket of seventy-five miles in sixty minutes? Thus all the resources of modern science are recklessly devoted to the increase of pace. Oil, steam, electricity,—all play their part in the hideous drama of scurry. Here is a road, says the amateur; let us cover as much of it as we can in the shortest possible time. We shall stifle our fellow-creatures with smoke and smell, we shall deafen them with the clatter of wheels and the roar of machinery; but we shall shake off the offending miles, and in the process we shall satisfy the demands of morality, politics, and sport.

The worship of speed.

So the amateur starts out from London, which he has no desire to leave, and dines at York, which he has no reason to visit, that he may not fall below the new standard. And the journals, which are only too sure an index of popular feeling, prophesy the downfall of England, because the French

The passion of racing.

packet went from Calais to Dover in one minute less time than our packet took to cross from Dover to Calais. And the world is racing, racing on all sides and in all vehicles. The express trains race to Scotland; the 'buses and trams race in the public street. That the mob may be hurled with a greater vehemence from one place to another, the ingenuity of America is permitted to riddle the subsoil of London with burrows called tubes, wherein adventurers run about like rabbits in a sand-hill. Nor is speed of transit the only speed sanctified by popular enthusiasm. Whatever is made must be made against time, and if it would completely suit the prevailing taste it must wear out as quickly as it has been made. Not long since the reproach was thrown in the teeth of the English that they built their bridges for eternity. Did one ever hear so reckless a waste of time and trouble? Why, the American will build you a bridge in a week, warranted not to last, a bridge which will be comfortably worn out before a new trick of architecture sends it out of date. And if it does let down a train, that does not matter: it is all good for the trade of the hustler, and a hundred souls may perchance be sent the quicker to another world.

But though the passion of speed appear dominating and universal, it has no touch with reason or intelligence. That pace is more precious than elegance, for instance, is a mere axiom; and it would be just as sensible to argue that a laggard life is the best life of all. Of course the economist will tell you that time is money. And maybe time *is* money in the kingdom of economy; but happily there is a realm not yet befogged by the dull science, and it is precisely in this realm—of sport and art—that the love of speed most fiercely intrudes itself. In the old days, when horses were not doped and cricketers worked for something else than averages, sport was the leisurely and gracious occupation of gentlemen. Those who engaged in horse-racing,

rowing, or cricket desired to win; but they desired to win within certain limits. Form controlled their actions as sternly as the hope of success. To snatch a victory by a trick or a new method could never have occurred to the best sportsmen a century ago. They respected their game with an old-fashioned loyalty which to-day would excite an empty laugh. Their horses were trained to win by the strength and speed that were natural to them. They were ridden not by monkeys, but by horsemen, who need not have shrunk from a comparison with the heroes of the Elgin marbles. And while a race afforded the world a noble spectacle, it ensured for the future a swift and sturdy strain. The race-horses of the whole world are English in blood. They are descended, one and all, from the great sires which have made our English turf famous; and they are thus descended because their sires, being wisely trained, ran in accordance with a wise tradition. The horses of to-day may be swifter over a single course; their times may appear better than the times of Eclipse and Flying Dutchman, when marked off by a modern stop-watch. But, as an expert has lately told us, they are trained merely for speed. They can last neither in distance nor in time. Short races and selling handicaps have left their mark upon them. Some can stay a mile, others discern their limit in five or six furlongs, and it is not likely that such animals as these, trained to acquire speed without bone or muscle, will hand on the ancient blood unimpaired.

The decay of the racecourse.

But as though the modern practices of the turf—the short race and the gate-money course—were not enough to ruin an ancient institution, the American trainer and the American jockey came over to confound our confusion. Now the Americans, in their worship of speed and their conviction that youth is better than maturity, are determined to get as much out of their horses as is possible in the shortest time. So they train them for

an instant success, as the purveyor of goose-liver crams his birds, or the headmaster of an English school trains his prize-boys for a scholarship. What becomes of them after the race matters little enough, and a drug or a drink may perhaps knock a pound off the weight they carry. And then, that every advantage may be caught, the jockey deserts the saddle, and perched up between the horse's ears, his back bent like the back of a cycling scorcher, he avoids the wind while he sacrifices control of his horse. If the horse stumbles and breaks his leg, as did Holocaust, so much the worse for the insurance office; if it cannon wildly into its competitors, so much the worse for the offending jockey. But in any case, the elegance of the ancient horsemanship is gone, and if the examples were widely followed the tradition of more than two centuries would be shattered.

For, though it sound a paradox, speed is not the sole aim even of horse-racing. And if the newest practices triumph it would be kinder and better to convert the horse into a machine. Fill his skin with steam or electricity, and let him run about the racecourse as the "sportsmen" recently ran from Paris to Berlin. Then we may encourage modern industry; and if the horse survives only in collections with zebras and wild asses, at least no disrespect will be paid to the deity of pace. But the other sports have suffered with horse-racing from the like madness of records and averages. Once upon a time cricket was a game in which the best side had a fair chance of winning. When All-England met Hambledon upon Broad Halfpenny they generally played to a finish, since the bat and the ball were equal adversaries. To-day cricket has fallen a victim to its own perfection. The old grounds were cricket-grounds, not billiard-tables, and the wickets were pitched by the bowlers themselves. "The chief art," said Nyren, "is to select a situation that will suit your own style of bowling, and

The development of cricket.

at the same time prove disadvantageous to your adversaries: as these two points, however, can rarely be accomplished, you can at all events pitch the wickets in such a manner as to benefit yourself." So, we are told, the famous Lumpy would select a point "where the ball was likely to shoot, that is, over the brow of a little hill," while Harris, considering the main chance of the game, would choose "a rising ground to pitch the ball against." Nowadays, neither Lumpy nor Harris would have the privilege of choice. The pitch is found for the bowlers, with neither hill nor rising ground, with neither weed nor tussock, and the necessity of resource is infinitely lessened. However skilful the bowler may be, the batsman is ready for him, because he knows that the accuracy of the pitch makes unexpected tricks impossible.

Again, the form of the game has completely changed with time. Once it was regarded as a cardinal sin to pull a ball across the wicket, or to treat a straight ball with contempt; but perpetual bowling to the off justified the pull, and no modern cricketer would obey the canons of sixty years ago. The old batsman rather lost his wicket than made a bad or inelegant stroke. The modern batsman keeps his eye on the scoring-tent, and is satisfied if only he place the ball in a safe corner. The complaint that cricket decays as players become more expert, is no new one. When in the thirties "the innovation of throwing instead of bowling balls" was rightly called modern, the same arguments were used by the players of those days as are used by those who to-day would devise a new weapon against the batsman. "Throwing" or round-arm bowling was supported "because it tended to shorten the game," but old Nyren raised an eloquent voice against the practice. He thought that the new style of bowling would kill "the fine style of hitting." "It is not the least important objection," he wrote, "I have to offer against the system, that it reduces the strikers too much to an equality,

since the indifferent batsman possesses as fair a chance of success as the most refined player; and the reason of this is obvious, because from the random manner of delivering the ball it is impossible for the fine batsman to have time for that finesse and delicate management which so peculiarly distinguished the elegant manœuvring of the chief players who occupied the field about eight, ten, and more years ago."

The advent of W. G. Grace.

There is much wisdom in these words of old Nyren's. For a while, no doubt, cricket became, as he said it would become, a sort of horse-play. The "finesse and delicate management," whose decay drove Lord Frederick Beauclerk from the cricket-field, were practised by too few artists. Style surrendered to practical run-getting. The strikers were reduced to a sort of equality, though, from the scorer's point of view, the levelling was rather up than down. But what Nyren could not foresee was that the game would be remade by a man of genius. In his general protest against innovation he showed his admirable sense; his precise conclusion was inadequate, because he could not know the change which presently overtook the game. In other words, W. G. Grace proved himself above and beyond all prophecies. He transformed the game, and by his own excellence he spoilt it. No method of play came amiss to him; he conquered every sort of bowling; he made every stroke his own. Back or forward was the same to his genius; he hit as easily to the off as on the leg side. He cannot be said to have had a favourite stroke, because all strokes were equal favourites. But while he showed what he could achieve by the confident simplicity of a monumental style, he unwittingly helped to ruin the game, of which he will always remain the finest exponent. He sowed the seed, and many may now gather the fruit. In other words, he displayed the possibilities of the batsman's art; and while his rivals still fall short of his

execution, the most careless of them have profited by his manifold inventions. Worse still, he has become as a standard, or bogey, unto all men. To beat his records is the end of every cricketer's desire, and so the aim of cricket—which is to beat the other side—is forgotten in the ambition of this or that batsman to increase his average, or to surpass somebody else's achievement. The rivalry of elevens is shifted from the whole to its parts, and the ingenuity of all the captains and all the M.C.C. is insufficient to restore the equal balance of the game.

Thus the harmony of cricket, as of other games, is marred by a note of professionalism—of that professionalism which encourages whatever is excessive, and would sacrifice the best interests of the sport for an increased record. The ancient forms are forgotten; the quiet pedantry which would lose a run rather than violate a canon of style is despised. And cricket is none the better for this lawlessness. Three days are now insufficient to finish a game, and if some device be not found to infuse a spirit of sportsmanship into what after all is a pastime, our batsmen will do their turns, like the artistes of the music halls, irrespective of their opponents or of one another. But nowhere has "professionalism," in its love of excess and its contempt of "form," been further carried than on the river. The American eight, which, happily for the future of rowing, lost the Grand Challenge at Henley, brilliantly illustrates the vice of professionalism. The mystery of the training, the isolation of the oarsmen, appear an unnecessary pose. But when we hear of a race rowed in a paper-boat, with a bucketing stroke, and directed by a coxswain upon whose luckless mouth is strapped a megaphone, we may well wonder why all this mechanical cleverness is thrown away. Artifice so ingenious should surely be spent upon the all-conquering autocar. Happily the Americans

Professionalism on the river.

were beaten. But had victory been theirs, they would not have shown sufficient cause for the destruction of an elegant sport. In rowing, as in horse-racing, too much may be paid for mere speed. The even swing of the bodies, the long sweep of the oars, which distinguish our English style of rowing, achieve more than the winning of the race: they afford to the world an admirable spectacle of harmonised force, and they give to the oarsmen the best chance of muscular exercise. So long, then, as sport is practised for its own sake, sportsmen will attempt to win without violating their own pleasure and their own pride. But when once rowing becomes a method of displaying a national superiority, then the coxswain will tie a megaphone round his neck, and there seems no reason why twin-screws should not be slipped under the paper-rudder. The speed of the boat would undoubtedly be increased, and if it be sport to sit upon a petroleum engine, it must also be sport to dash up or down the river on a penny-steamboat.

The hustler in literature.

However, the world is nowadays so frankly enamoured of pace that nothing is done for its own sake. The same hustling, which would abolish sport, will, if it be not foiled, abolish literature also. Time was when a man, having something to say, wrote a book; and having written a book, gave it to a publisher to publish. The publisher announced the book in such terms and in such a place as became the dignity of letters, and if the book were worthy it went down the years respected and not forgotten. Even the hack hoped with a vague optimism that, like the despised British engineer, he built for eternity, and there was nothing in the relations of author and publisher that was not pleasant and dignified. But in the hurry to heap up dollars, we are told, these old and pleasant relations have been disturbed. The last thing which the modern publisher wants, if he be a hustler, is a

book. A knowledge of advertising, an army of sandwich-men, space on the hoardings, and an influence with the managers of dry-goods stores—these, we are told, are indispensable to a literary success. The book itself matters nothing. It is composed to last for an hour. "The book of the hour"—that is its proud title, and in the afternoon another sample takes its place. The author who writes the book assumes but a small share of the responsibility. "In at least one case," we are told by a trustworthy witness, "a most successful novel was written deliberately according to a recipe supplied by the publisher, who gave the author definite instructions as to the period, the plot, and the characters, and had the manuscript considerably doctored to suit the taste of the public before he issued it. The book was simply rammed down the throat of the American public."

It would be difficult to excel the simple eloquence of that pronouncement. The public no longer chooses what it wishes to read; it merely takes what is rammed down its throat, and is content, because it believes that the ramming process is culture. But in this race England of course lags behind. The Publishers' and Booksellers' Association, doubtless an effete conspiracy, objects to the classification of books as "dry goods"—a prejudice as idle and obstinate as the above-mentioned prejudice, which persuades the engineer to build a bridge that will not crack beneath the first truck which crosses it. And yet, though the English publisher has not yet learnt the art of cramming the public throat, not a little adroit advertisement may be noticed even in our own laggard country. There are certain trade journals which do their best to confuse the writer with the mountebank. These would not shame the enterprise of the firms which patronise the dry-goods store, and they have a subtle method of advertising their favourite wares which is beyond praise. They tabulate the newer books according to the number of copies which have been sold of each in

our more earnest provinces. One week we are told that Birmingham "uses"—we cannot say "reads"—more of Corelli than of Le Gallienne; another week we hear that a thousand cakes—we beg pardon, "copies"—of Hocking have been consumed in Manchester. Instantly the rival seats of culture—Salford, Leeds, and the rest—pounce upon Le Gallienne or Hocking, as the case may be, and use no other until the taste of the Midlands begins to change. It is all very droll, and it has nothing to do with literature, but it is the fashion of the hour to confuse terms, and professing one trade, to pursue another.

The Vandal at work.

And now a worse calamity befalls us. It was the custom of our ancestors to build after the manner of the British engineers, and their houses have often survived the assaults of time and chance. Now this durability does not please the evangelists of pace. What right, they ask, have houses or gardens to outstay their welcome? They have served their term, and it is high time they were shovelled away to make room for smart little villas crammed with telephones and electric bells. So the Vandal goes forth determined upon the extinction of beauty. Nor is he the product of modern times. He has been always with us, and the architectural history of England, as of most other countries, is a history of wanton ruin. Sometimes the Vandal has destroyed what never can be replaced, because a pedantry of taste persuaded him to believe that there was only one style permissible—the Italian. Thus Bentley would have destroyed his college of Trinity because he saw in it a damnable Gothicism, and a squalid corner of the Great Court remains to show all men what he would have accomplished had his power kept pace with his ambition. In the eighteenth century, indeed, many a fine building fell before this rage of Classic taste; yet for the eighteenth century it may be said that its taste was Classic, and that it generally builded

with dignity when it destroyed. To our own time no such compliment may be paid. The architecture of modern England is oddly suited. It buys its windows in Italy, its round towers in France, its tiles in Lambeth, and its decorations everywhere. So that when it dares to destroy it has nothing but a vile medley wherewith to cover the desert ground. Moreover, our architects have too often shown so keen a desire for a job that they have condemned as unsafe walls which, having stood the storms of centuries, were prepared to endure the centuries yet unborn. Thus, while history has been violated, associations have been contemned for the profit of the architect and the glory of the millionaire.

And the law affords no protection to ancient buildings. You may not kill a man, but you murder a house. The Vandal, indeed, is free to wreak his vengeance anywhere he please, so long as he is supported by sufficient wealth. The amenity of his neighbours is nothing to him; the regrets of those for whom a mansion hallowed by time and rich in associations is no mere mass of bricks and mortar avail not at all. He only knows that the house is his, because he has paid for it, and that he can and will do what he likes with his own. If a popular agitation should increase the value of his property, then he will sell and compliment himself on the astuteness which bought at the right moment. Now, if the Vandals cherished a respect for the form which should govern life, they would refrain their hand. They would reflect that a beautiful house is the creation of an artist no less than a beautiful picture or a beautiful book. But the man who would shrink from cutting up a canvas or burning a book has no scruple at all in razing a house to the ground. Here, of course, an obvious economy is implied. The value of a canvas is not enhanced by scraping, and a book, however bitterly its owner disapproves of it, may fetch a few shillings or pounds at an auction

sale. The destruction of a house, on the other hand, is often profitable. Where once stood the harbourage of a single family, a lofty mountain of flats may quickly rise. So it is avarice that has prompted the destruction of many an ancient quarter in Paris. Or a new street may save the idle foot-passenger a hundred yards, and that he may reach his useless destination a little quicker, the most ancient landmark is often sacrificed. But while the vandalism of our towns is heart-breaking, far worse is that spirit of greedy destruction which destines the country to be a builder's playground, and fells in an hour trees whose growth may be measured by centuries.

Marble Hill.

Even now the grandiose river-way to London is threatened,—the river-way which hitherto has escaped by a miracle. Despite the encroachment of London, the Thames at Twickenham and Richmond still flows between forest-glades. Here and there an austerely classical mansion interrupts the vista of green, and gives to the spectacle a humane touch of elegance and splendour. The paltry villas, which may last, perhaps, a paltry thirty years, are in the background, it is true, but they are unseen. And now comes the wealthy speculator, with his bank-notes and his lack of reverence, to lay waste the paradise. Marble Hill is already threatened, and if that be allowed to go, who knows but the jerry-builder may work his will upon Orleans, Lebanon, and York Houses? There is but one other spectacle in Europe so splendid as this river sweep, so fine a blending of human art and of nature, which is the art of God — the landscape seen from the terrace of St. Germain. But unless private generosity or the taxpayers come to our aid, St. Germain will be left without a rival. That Marble Hill has escaped so many years is wonderful indeed. It is beautiful; it is rich in association; its house and trees have endured the shock of two centuries. Therefore it possesses all the

qualities which tempt the Vandal to destruction. It was built for Lady Suffolk; its gardens were designed by Pope. All the wit and talent of the eighteenth century sparkled beneath the shadow of its trees or within its spacious parlours. Poets addressed verses to the house and to the lady who dwelt within it. "Marble Hill fired Mordaunt," says Mr D. S. M'Coll, who has eloquently fought the Vandals; "it softened Swift, and is Pope's most poetical work.

> 'My groves, my echoes, and my birds
> Have taught him his poetic words,'

it says of him in Swift's Dialogue. Marble Hill is a monument of our poetry, where we may taste the orderly dream of eighteenth-century classics. The trees of it have outgrown the order, it is true, even as its paradise of birds 'outsings' all the poetic words of the designer. But a poet made for us 'this scene,' and we ought to be the sorrier to destroy it."

Indeed we ought. But are we? From the first the house seemed doomed, and Swift's prophecy has been ominously and literally fulfilled. "Some South Sea broker," he wrote—

> "Some South Sea broker from the city
> Will purchase me, and more's the pity;
> Let all my fine plantations waste,
> To fit them to his vulgar taste."

That is precisely what is happening now. That is precisely what would have happened long since had the gardens not been protected by a piece of ground, where at certain seasons the floods encroach. And if attempts at salvation fail, maybe the owner will comfort himself with the reflection that he is but fulfilling a poet's scornful prophecy.

Not far from Twickenham another piece of vandalism

Hogarth's house.

is threatened. Hogarth's house will presently come to the ground, if a sufficient subscription be not made to save it. The money asked is not much—only £1500—yet in three months a mere tithe has been collected. At Chiswick it is the same story as at Twickenham. The house has been sold as part of a property destined for the reception of villa-residences, and unless it be speedily rescued, it will either be destroyed or dilapidated. Now, there is every reason why an effort should be made to preserve the house. Hogarth is one among the few glories of our English school. Even if we forget for the moment that he was a great artist, we should still remember that he illustrated the life of his age as eloquently and as wittily as did Fielding in another art. He belongs to England, more intimately even than does Sir Joshua, and most closely of all he belongs to Chiswick. There he lived—in this plain and simple house—for fifteen years; there he was buried when death overtook him; and if there be any virtue in the visiting of shrines, it is at Chiswick that we should pay our respect to William Hogarth. Though the house is but a fragment of itself, there are still marks by which it may be known. On the gate-posts are the leaden urns, which Garrick gave to his friend for their proper embellishment. And were the building saved, the rest would be easy. The house will be turned into a memorial museum, whence nothing shall be excluded that illustrates the art and the life of William Hogarth, and thus honour shall be done in the wisest fashion to a painter of exquisite skill and fancy. Surely England owes something to the memory of Hogarth, and even Chiswick might gird herself to a sacrifice—for, to put the matter on the lowest basis possible, she will find her profit in the pilgrims who worship at Hogarth's shrine.

But, says the hustler, why save anything but time? Hogarth is dead and done with; indeed, he has long out-

stayed his welcome, and there are plenty of live dogs eager to be rammed down the public's throat. The rising generation is knocking at the door, decrying the competition of its elders. So let us destroy what our fathers have builded, and congratulate ourselves that we have even a pittance from the vandalism. Let us sacrifice the form and manner of life that we may cram one other foolish ambition into our span of years. Amenity, killed by speed or avarice, seems no longer of any account. Yet some may remain who still respect the leisurely, well-ordered practices of their forefathers. "In an imperfect work," said Thoreau, "time is an ingredient, but into a perfect work time does not enter." Strange it is that this wise aphorism should have come to us from the country of the hustlers, and it is a consolation to reflect that no haste can impair its wisdom nor any trust on earth obliterate its eternal truth.

SEPTEMBER.

"DALMENY is one of those," said an Eton master some forty years ago, "who like the palm without the dust;" and assuredly Lord Rosebery has gathered more palms with less dust than the most of men. He has been Prime Minister, he has won the Derby twice, and neither enterprise, we may suppose, has taxed his energies to the utmost. Eager to win yet timid of the contest, he prefers, as in his school-days, an easy triumph. He would still let the laurel adorn his brow; but the noise and hazard of the arena are so bitterly distasteful to him, that when he might achieve another brilliant victory he scratches his name and lets an outsider pass the post.

The palm without the dust.

And so he has reached at last the poor pinnacle of his career, and that pinnacle is marked ineffective ambition. Never, indeed, did he scale so chill a height of inaction as when he declared to the Liberals of the City that he "must proceed alone." A remnant of his party, always loyal to him, would once again have accepted his leadership; yet Lord Rosebery, according to his own agricultural metaphor, prefers the solitary furrow. He has chosen the profession of politics; he is an assiduous critic both of friends and foes; yet when he is asked to proclaim a policy, or to consolidate a party, he is fearful and dilatory. He is a Nicias who translates hesitation into inertness, a Fabius who delays so strenuously that he never comes into action. Nor would his temperament and character be an inconvenience to the State had he

not usurped a sort of leadership. The destruction of party government, designed by the stiff-necked arrogance of Mr Gladstone, who forced his servants to suspend their private judgment, has been confirmed by Lord Rosebery, who, accepting the leadership, is determined not to lead. Now, he is waiting for the call of the people; now, he is unhappy because the Liberal Unionists decline to support him who was a member of the Home Rule Cabinet. But whatever the cause, the result is the same. Lord Rosebery retires in an oratorical flourish, and leaves us regretting that he ever deserted his library and his stable to dally with the sterner duties of government.

Lord Rosebery's lassitude.

How, then, shall we explain this aggressive lassitude? It is due, first of all, to a cunningly unstable character. It has been wisely pointed out that in sketching an Archibald Primrose of the seventeenth century, Bishop Burnet was drawing a prophetic portrait of the present Lord Rosebery. Yet even this comparison implies a certain flattery. While both the Primroses are adroit,—while both are for "soft counsels and slow methods,"—the last of them is scarcely so dexterous as his ancestor. The Lord Rosebery whom we know can hardly be said to have "an art of speaking to all men according to their sense of things, and so to draw out their secrets, while he concealed his own." Truly he may conceal such secrets as he has, but he is seldom successful in surprising the secrets of others. For the fact is, his brain is uncertain rather than subtle. A study of his speeches propounds a question, where it does not extract response. What does he mean by it all? you are impelled to ask, even while you admire the orator's easy trick of refusing an answer. And you come to the conclusion that he means little or nothing. Mr Gladstone escaped notice, because at one time or another he expressed all opinions: he might be inconsistent with his party; he could hardly be inconsistent with himself. Where there was not a safeguard—an *an* or an *if*—there

was an ancient view, anciently held, which did not conflict with the more modern inspiration. But with a dexterity which his ancestor might have envied, Lord Rosebery says very little in many words. He is not wholly commonplace, yet he is never outspoken or original. Literature and politics are alike a pleasant incentive to his Muse, who is sworn neither to pledge his credit nor to surprise his friends. For many years Lord Rosebery was a professed Home-Ruler, bound to separation "by every tie of honour and of policy." But if you ask for a lucid declaration you will be disappointed to find nothing clearer than vague surmises of "Home Rule all round," and a few broken words concerning Imperial Federation. In brief, if we put aside the reform of the Upper House, we shall find no question on which Lord Rosebery candidly supports the party he calls his own; and, further, that the more clearly defined is his opinion, the more bitterly is it opposed to the creed of the Radicals. He is an Imperialist, for instance, and he has always been an Imperialist; but not even the surrender after Majuba, of which he disapproved, availed to weaken the influence of Mr Gladstone; and he witnessed the sacrifice of Gordon without roughly overturning the chair of office.

Thus is it that to high rank and a love of affairs he brings no passionate conviction, no reckless enthusiasm. Moreover, the defects of an inactive temperament have been intensified fivefold by a hapless education. For Lord Rosebery was at once the creation and the creature of Mr Gladstone. That cunning parliamentarian discovered the young Scottish peer, foresaw his possibilities of usefulness, and thrust him as soon as might be into office. At the very outset Lord Rosebery displayed his natural insecurity. Within a brief space he had refused, accepted, and resigned an under-secretaryship. But Mr Gladstone did not despair, and the famous Mid-Lothian campaigns assured Lord Rosebery's position in the Liberal party.

The creation of Mr Gladstone.

No worse training could be designed for a young politician. Henceforth Lord Rosebery was hypnotised with the rest; like Mr Childers and many another, he tacitly sanctioned deeds which he did not approve, and with Mr Gladstone's eye upon him he doubtless found a certain merit in the performance. Disagreements there were—so much is matter of common knowledge—and Lord Rosebery took a malicious pleasure in recalling them to the memory of the City Fathers. But Gladstone suppressed insubordination by a method of his own, and the world heard no note of discord. "With that marvellous gift of eloquence and rhetoric," says Lord Rosebery, "as rich as the curtain of the temple of old, he veiled those discrepancies and that nakedness from the public." The party, in fact, was the party of one man, and if the Liberals are now without a leader, it is largely because no one could emerge from the tutelage of Mr Gladstone into an independent command. Obedience he enjoined upon his followers—obedience dumb and unquestioning; but he could not impart the secrets of leadership, which for him consisted in the marvellous gift of rhetoric, "rich as the curtain," &c., and in a personality which claimed submission without rule or reason. In brief, suppression was a necessity of the Gladstonian policy, and Mr Chamberlain alone, of the younger lieutenants trained by Gladstone, has had the energy and the candour to throw off the heavy allegiance.

An unfortunate influence.

But upon Lord Rosebery the influence of Mr Gladstone was doubly unfortunate. Not only was the Imperialist forced to subscribe to measures which he could not approve, but he was protected from criticism beneath his leader's vast umbrella of responsibility. So he led a sheltered life, immune from the influence of journals and from the angry clamour of his opponents. Whatever he achieved of good or ill was put down to the wisdom or the folly of Mr Gladstone, and, until that Minister's retirement, Lord

Rosebery could snap his fingers in the face of the press. But once in the seat of authority, he was naturally assailed in his own person: he discovered that criticism is not always welcome to the sensitive, and though amiably received for the most part, he proved that his training had rendered him unfit for the rough and tumble of political strife. Moreover, he had not acquired the gifts without which a party leader is bound to fail. He was not an adept in that art of "patching up old clothes" which in Mr Gladstone's phrase a Prime Minister was called to exercise. He was, maybe, too simple, too honest, or too timid for his post. But the truth is, he could neither frame a fighting policy nor force his opinions upon his colleagues. Doubtless, too, he gave a wider scope to his Imperialism when he was free of Mr Gladstone's control, and thus severed himself still further from those who should have followed him.

But whatever the cause of failure, his leadership was brief as ineffectual. He resigned in favour of a politician who devoted to the service of the party a fine set of variable and inconsistent views. And now he himself has come valiantly forth as an independent adviser. He is willing to give his country the fruit of his vast wisdom and long experience. He would play the part of Pitt from an Opposition bench. The offer would be pathetic, if it were not also a little grotesque. It is true that our Radical Prime Minister has chosen for his prime heroes Chatham, Pitt the younger, and Napoleon; but the example of these tyrants should have trained him to a better way: an admiration of their high courage might have inspired him with a proud patriotism. They at any rate never suffered from hysteria; they saw their country's real danger and faced it. Yet Lord Rosebery, being an impartial adviser, is also hysterical. Now, the ignorance of Britain appals him; now, he shudders at the proximity of France. "I have no party," he once retorted upon Lord James of Hereford, and, he might have added, "no policy." Why,

then, should he perplex himself with politics? He has more resources than most disappointed statesmen have been able to boast. Grafton sought solace in Newmarket and Nancy Parsons; Charles James Fox flew to Porson's 'Orestes,' and owned that he felt "quite excusable in giving more attention to Euripides than to either House of Parliament." Lord Rosebery has had a more glorious career on the Turf than fell to the lot of Grafton; he is a more distinguished man of letters than Fox. He may therefore without despair alternate his refuge, and when he has bred another Derby winner surprise our admiration by another monograph.

Lord Rosebery's popularity.

But more strange than his vacillating career is his unbroken popularity. Being a leader, he may demand to be led, he may throw over his party at its worst crisis, but he cannot destroy the people's interest. No public man of our day has a more generous notice of the press which he fears; his name is rarely absent from our newspapers, and his triumphs either on the racecourse or in the field of letters are always joyously acclaimed. What, then, is the secret of this general esteem? We believe it is Lord Rosebery's versatility. Like Mr Gladstone, he touches the world at many points, and at each point he awakens a new public. A mere politician must needs appeal to a few; a politician who dabbles in letters and wins the Derby may easily become the people's idol. For the reputation of Lord Rosebery, like most other reputations, was made and is supported by the press, and the press likes no one so well as the man who does something else. It is dry work applauding a politician; but a politician who has won the Derby or has written a book is as interesting as a peer who turns faith-healer, or as an actor who reads the lessons in church. Besides, there is the sporting instinct to admire a man who cut all previous records by being Prime Minister and winning the Derby twice. To such a hero much timidity and ter-

giversation may be forgiven, and Lord Rosebery can explain all the fame which an indulgent press has brought him. But the press, for all its arrogance, is not yet omnipotent, and is daily weakening its influence by a reckless disregard of truth. It can force the world to talk about this man or that; it cannot ensure any man's acceptance. In other words, it has the power of nomination and none other. Accordingly, it has nominated Lord Rosebery for every position to which wealth and intelligence may aspire, but its nomination has not been ratified, and in its despite Lord Rosebery will probably remain "dissociated and isolated" until the end. Fifteen years ago Mr Gladstone declared him "the man of the future"; a man of the future he remains to-day—with a shorter time of fulfilment.

Lord Chesterfield.

When Lord Rosebery, in his panegyric of Gladstone, desired a parallel for the lettered statesman, he turned to the eighteenth century and chose Chesterfield. And truly few men of his age excelled Chesterfield either in wit or in affairs. Yet, by a misfortune which often overtakes the greatest men, Chesterfield has been persistently and deliberately misunderstood. He has been set down as a preacher and practiser of loose morals by critics who cannot have read his famous 'Letters,' and he has been summarily dismissed from the field of politics as a kind of fashionable Mugwump. But he was in reality serious both in politics and morals. He spent many years in attempting to train up a son in the way he should go, and the experiment failed, because he was too ambitious for practical life. He was perhaps the wisest Viceroy that ever went to Ireland, and he was endowed with the gift of political prophecy in a higher degree than any of his contemporaries. And he has been universally execrated. His latest editor, however, has made a loyal attempt to revise the hasty, ill-formed judgment of his predecessors. He has given us

a complete text of the 'Letters to his Son,'[1] and he has prefaced them with an essay which is just, lucid, and well-written, so that a rash judgment will seem in the future even more reprehensible. Here, within a brief compass, are all the facts, and if, after a loyal study of them, Chesterfield still appears a monster of worldliness and chicanery, then argument is useless and truth eclipsed.

Why, indeed, should this elegant wit and polished man of the world have won the evil opinion of many generations? The old proverb affords an answer: "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him." It is a popular superstition that time corrects immature judgments, and sets in their proper places the over-maligned and the too-much-bepraised. But, alas! time seldom works such miracles as this. Fame is too often won by cunning, and once acquired fame (or ill-fame) is not easily snatched away. An intriguing man may compel his contemporaries to take him at his own valuation, and if no casual exposure intervene, posterity, which will probably dislike research, agrees with the intriguer's contemporaries. For justice can only be done to the dead by those who do not shrink from study, and it is obviously easier to accept a well-worn judgment than to discover the truth in musty documents.

His quarrel with Dr Johnson.

It was the first and greatest of Lord Chesterfield's misfortunes to quarrel with Dr Johnson, who not only had the heavy hand of a fierce hater, but who caught and has held the ear of the whole world. Thousands who never read one line of Chesterfield's writing remember Johnson's intolerant phrase, "the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing-master." On more than one occasion Johnson modified the opinion, which was nothing better than the expression of a bitter prejudice. The story is familiar

[1] The Letters of Lord Chesterfield to his Son. Edited by Charles Strachey. London: Methuen.

enough. Johnson offered to Chesterfield the patronage of his dictionary. Chesterfield construed the duties of patron somewhat niggardly. He sent Johnson £10, and seems to have forgotten all about it. The masterpiece was wellnigh finished. Then he heralded its coming in the 'World.' Johnson took an ample and characteristic revenge: he wrote the celebrated letter wherein he asked the celebrated question, "Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?" He composed a definition in his dictionary which holds its own beside his other definition of an exciseman. A patron, said he, is "commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid by flattery"; and he emendated a line in his satire: "toil, envy, want, the *patron*, and the jail." The battery was heavy to punish so slight an offence, and Chesterfield met the attack with characteristic indifference. He took an open pleasure in Johnson's letter. He read it to Dodsley, and confessed, "this man has great power," and yet by his attitude denied the Doctor's power to wound him. In brief, both men behaved well, and in accordance with their character, and it is not likely that either cherished resentment when the incident was closed. But Johnson's phrase is remembered by those who forget the Earl's offence, and it has been the common verdict.

His 'Letters.'

Yet one method of disproof has always been at hand: a study of the letters themselves, which inculcate nothing save order and decency, honour and honesty. Nowhere else in literature will you find a wiser sympathy with the young, a deeper comprehension of the folly and heedlessness of youth. Chesterfield's own temperament confirms what he more than once hints, that he was a prig at Cambridge and elsewhere; and it is easy to believe that in the best sense he was never young. But he understood youth so well, that he wrote to his son not as a superior, but as an equal friend.

"I am not stoically advising, nor parsonically preaching to you to be a Stoic at your age," he wrote with excellent wisdom, and knowing the circumstances of court life he gave such counsel as he was sure would be useful. But never does he underrate or obscure the essential necessity of virtue, while he puts the attainments of a gentleman in a just and proper order. "What is the way, then," he asks, "to arrive at that perfection which you promise me to aim at? It is, first, to do your duty towards God and man; without which everything else signifies nothing: secondly, to acquire great knowledge; without which you will be a very contemptible man, though you may be a very honest one: and lastly, to be very well-bred; without which you will be a very disagreeable, unpleasing man, though you should be an honest and a learned one." Are these the words of a hard immoral cynic? If they are, we give up the case, for they are to be found on every page of the 'Letters.'

Nor does he ever leave in doubt which qualities are subordinate. Religion he frankly resigns to Mr Harte, because he rightly believed that that eminent divine was better equipped than himself for its inculcation. He even goes so far as to allow that dancing and dress are "very trifling, silly things," but, says he with admirable wisdom, there is no reason why men of sense should not do them well. In other words, "Diogenes the Cynic was a wise man for despising a thousand foolish customs, but a fool for showing it." Similarly, he points out to his son that if he affects gallantry, he must affect it as a gentleman, not as a rake; and it is this injunction which has been construed by a strange anachronism into what nowadays is called "vice." Again, we wonder if the critics of Chesterfield have ever read his 'Letters'; for most assuredly, if the writer himself perused the modern commentaries, he would have every right to own himself puzzled. He set out to teach a boy, naturally deficient in elegance, the stern duties of scholarship, and the plain

necessity of good manners. He kept him so severely at work that had he been a rake he had still lacked leisure; and he insisted with laudable frequency that good behaviour, a pleasant mien, a scrupulous restraint, were the adornments of a gentleman. More than all things, he hated superficiality: "approfondissez," he says again and again to his son, who was perhaps by nature indolent; and consideration for others was for him the very essence of good-breeding. Yet he has been so fiercely blamed for his high ideals by many generations of men, who despise the trifling, amiable side of life, that it seems as if honesty and good manners are incompatible. Is there, then, a merit in boorishness? Does it not matter in what guise a man presents himself to the world? Of course there is a vast demerit in boorishness, and no man is the better or more moral for seeming a churl. The world is governed, and will always be governed, by charm as well as by virtue; and Lord Chesterfield in his 'Letters,' which are a masterpiece in the art of presentation, candidly admits this truth. Marlborough, says he, owed much to the Graces. For this heresy no mercy has been shown him. He has been censured, ever since his book saw the light, because he did not pack a treatise upon good-breeding with the maxims of a trite morality; which is as foolish as though we reproached a grave politician with walking very ill upon the tight-rope.

His services to the State.

But the detractors of this eminent man do him an injustice which does not touch his writings. They are so eager to dismiss him as a trifler and a cynic, the two personages he most bitterly disliked, that they forget his political wisdom and the services which he did to the State. Had he lived in a happier reign he would doubtless have attained the highest offices. But he was too independent in spirit to conciliate George II., he was too fiercely opposed to privilege and corruption to satisfy his colleagues. The few offices which were conferred upon him he held with dignity and

distinction. Above all, he had his way, and opposed the king's insolence with an insolence of his own. When the Secretary of State, objecting to the appointment of Dr Chevenix to an Irish bishopric, declared that his Majesty advised him to look out for another bishop, Chesterfield "begged his lordship would desire the king to look out for another Lord Lieutenant." A letter which he addressed at the same time to the Duke of Newcastle does credit to his candour, but it suggests a reason why the king and his advisers did not often invite him to their councils.

"I am sorry your Grace and my two predecessors here," thus he wrote, "have had so much trouble about my ecclesiastical recommendations, which, were it not for the sakes of the persons concern'd, I am very indifferent about: because the refusal would save me a great deal of trouble, and restore me to that kind of life which I unwillingly left and shall most willingly return to. If my recommendation to the dirtiest bishopric in Ireland is not to prevail, it can only be because it is mine: an indignity by which I am distinguished from all my Predecessors, and to which I will upon no account submit, and I think it but fair to give Your Grace and our friends notice, that upon this foot I will not be Lord Lieutenant one hour after my arrival in London."

His Irish administration.

Of course such an argument as this prevailed, and Lord Chesterfield proved himself an admirable administrator. In Ireland, at any rate, he was neither cynical nor finicking. He could scarcely have arrived in Dublin at a more hazardous moment; yet never for one moment did he lose his grasp of the situation. On the one hand he was as conciliatory as he might be, on the other he prepared so strong a force that Ireland would have been helpless, even if she had been bent upon rebellion. "If the Irish behave as faithful subjects," said he to an agent of the Pretender, "they shall be treated as such; but if they act in a different manner, I shall be worse to them than Cromwell." Even with the Pretender at Derby and the Hanoverian dynasty

in peril, Ireland under the rule of Chesterfield remained loyal. His first step was salutary and characteristic: he appointed as private secretary "a very genteel pretty young fellow, but not a man of business," and he justified the appointment at the first interview. "Sir," said he to the secretary, "you will receive the emoluments of your place, but I will do the business myself, being determined to have no First Minister." Nor did he rely on any man's assistance. Accessible to all, he received petitions with a shrewd and kindly air of authority. But he took his own counsel, and admitted no favour.

Of the religious acrimony which divided Ireland then more bitterly than to-day he made no account, and when he was told that his own coachman was a papist and went to Mass, "Does he indeed?" he replied; "I will take care that he shall never carry me there." While he attempted to mitigate the fierceness of bigotry, he did not neglect more practical methods of reform: he encouraged the industries of Ireland, and he did his best to suppress favouritism. But he expressed his aim so well in a letter to Mr Prior that nothing need be added to his own words.

"These are the sorts of jobs," says he of sundry manufactures, "that I wish people in Ireland would attend to with as much industry and care as they do to jobs of a very different nature. . . . Think of your manufactures at least as much as of your militia, and be as much upon your guard against Poverty as against Popery: take my word for it, you are in more danger of the former than of the latter."

And in another letter, he says in the proper tone of irony:

"I am sensible that I shall be reckoned a very shallow politician for my attention to such trifling objects as the improvement of your lands, the extension of your manufactures, and the increase of your trade, which only tend to the advantages of the public: whereas an able Lord Lieutenant ought to employ his thoughts in

greater matters. He should think of jobs for favourites, sops for enemies, managing parties, and engaging Parliaments to vote away their own and their fellow-subjects' liberties and properties. But these great acts of Government, I confess, are above me, and people should not go out of their depth."

Such was the humour in which he approached the task of government, and it is no wonder that he succeeded. The compliment which he paid Ireland should still be remembered there with pride. "I would much rather be distinguished," he declared, "by the name of the *Irish Lord Lieutenant* than by that of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland."

While Chesterfield did his best for Ireland, Ireland repaid his zeal with enthusiasm. When he left he was followed to the boat by sorrowing thousands, and his name is still a wholesome tradition. Even the king was satisfied, marvelling at "the Spirit, the Solidity, and the *Bravery*" of a certain despatch. "Chesterfield is in the right," said he; "it is the wisest letter that ever was wrote." But the truth is that Chesterfield was not only a wise administrator but a political philosopher to boot. He saw what should be done, and more than once was able to do it. The boon which he conferred upon the country by reconciling Pitt and Newcastle cannot be estimated, and he achieved the reconciliation in spite of his own private feeling. He had no "partiality" for Pitt—so much he confesses—but he saw that Pitt was the only man who could save the country, and he patched up the necessary truce. But his greatest achievement was to foretell—in 1753—the French Revolution; and if politics be anything better than guesswork, Chesterfield's prescience cannot be too highly admired. He knew the state of France as no contemporary knew it, and from the familiar facts he drew the true, the inevitable conclusion. "Wherever you are," writes he to his son, "inform yourself minutely of, and attend particularly

The presence of a political philosopher.

to, the affairs of France: they grow serious, and, in my opinion, will grow more and more so every day." And having pictured the king despised, the Ministers disunited, the people poor, and consequently discontented, he points out that "armies, though always the supporters and tools of absolute power for the time being, are always the destroyers of it too," and concludes with these memorable words: "In short, all the symptoms which I have ever met with in history previous to great changes and revolutions in government, now exist and daily increase in France." Is there a single living politician who can read thus clearly the lessons of history? Yet though Chesterfield wisely foresaw the future, he is still dismissed with a quip or an epigram.

Chesterfield's irony.

Besides the animosity of Johnson, there is another reason why Chesterfield should have incurred the general hatred. He was a wit, and he was a wit who practised the dangerous art of irony. He knew the risk which he ran perfectly well, and prudently warned his son against a bitter tongue. "That ready wit," says he, "which you so partially allow me, and so justly Sir Charles Williams, may create many admirers; but, take my word for it, it makes few friends. It shines and dazzles like the noonday sun, but, like that too, is very apt to scorch, and therefore is always feared. . . . Never seek for wit: if it presents itself, well and good; but even in that case, let your judgment interpose; and pray take care that it be not at the expense of anybody." Happily for us, Lord Chesterfield did not carry his theory into practice. He dared to exercise his wit even on the majesty of the king, to whom, when he refused to sign a certain commission, saying he would rather sign a commission for the devil, Chesterfield retorted: "I only beg leave to put your Majesty in mind that the commission is indited to our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin." What could the king do but laugh and assent: "My lord, do as you

please"? Better still was his famous address to the House of Lords. "Wit, my lords, is a sort of property," said he; "it is the property of those who have it, and too often the only property they have to depend on. It is indeed but a precarious dependence. Thank God! we, my lords, have a dependence of another kind; we have a much less precarious support, and therefore cannot feel the inconveniences of the bill now before us." That is an irony which does not make friends, and Chesterfield has suffered for his temperament. Of course his superiority of mind bred an indifference to the general opinion, and it is unlikely that he would have resented the censure of those whose vanity he had wounded. But the best refutation of the opinion is his own works. If Chesterfield failed in his main object of converting his simple son into a polished gentleman, he at least revealed himself a man of the world in the best sense, a strange mixture of *badinage* and high seriousness, a moralist who never sinks to the prig, a scholar who scorns the narrowness of the pedant. Above all, we esteem his gift of sympathy. Self-centred as he was, he was always unselfish where his son's interest was involved. His patience and amiability are equal to the severest strain, and, for all his vanity, he subordinates even that, if only he may be corrected by Philip Stanhope.

Mr Caine and his rival.

Mr Hall Caine, we have been told by a churlish critic, has not taken to heart the injunction of Lord Chesterfield. He, it is said, has not troubled to remember the Graces. His last performance—entitled 'The Eternal City'[1]—has no elegance of thought, of diction, or of fancy. Vague meanings are expressed in empty, turgid words; fantastic images are asked to light up the baldest facts; tarns and glaciers and boulders pretend to illuminate a Roman sunrise;

[1] The Eternal City. By Hall Caine. London: William Heinemann.

and on every page, in every line, rhetoric and vanity make sense impossible. At one moment we are confronted with appalling commonplace: "nations sink and rise," Mr Caine discovers, "but humanity is immortal." At another, a jumble of meaningless words pretends to hide a profound thought, and we are seriously told that "humanity is the Pope of the Twentieth Century." But we must not too narrowly examine Mr Caine's argument; the paltry blemishes which we have named were suggested by the voice of detraction; for with all his faults he has one virtue—the virtue of imagination—which he shares with no more than one contemporary. Now, imagination may be defined as the art of writing eloquently about what you do not know. Any fool, it is obvious, can describe what he has seen or heard. It takes a great man to imagine. And in this trick of imagination Mr Hall Caine need fear no competitor, save only Miss Corelli. Perhaps we must place the talented lady rather higher than Mr Caine, for while she knows rather less than he, she says a good deal more. But both brows wear the bays, and though the artistic temperament cannot wholly escape jealousy, the world may listen to the amœbean strains with pleasure unalloyed.

Two pilgrims.

Miss Corelli went to Rome, and a similar impulse drove Mr Caine to the Eternal City. It is idle to inquire which went there first: for us the ground of satisfaction is that they both found their way to the cradle of culture and of faith. Of course they might have gone to Athens or to Margate. But they refrained from these popular resorts. They went to Rome, and it is not for us to regret it. The admirable results of Miss Corelli's research have long been before the world, and Mr Caine's discoveries, if not quite so bold, are at least as valuable. For he, too, carries us away into a world of art and faith, of vice and beauty; but, as becomes a sterner talent, he reveals unto us also the secrets of politics. And his courage is equal to his

imagination. The Pope and the King of Italy are both puppets in his hand; nor does he hesitate, under the guise of romance, to discuss the profoundest questions which agitate statesmen and theologians. But it is time to approach his masterpiece more nearly, and to hint what treasures will reward the reader's curiosity.

David Rossi, or David Leone, is the son of the Pope, though neither he nor his august father know the horrid truth; and he first appears before us in the streets of London with a frozen squirrel under his arm. A philanthropic doctor of Soho picks him up, restores him to life, and educates him as his son. The doctor, of course, is a prince in disguise, exiled for his liberal opinions, and the Pope's son and the Prince's daughter grow up together. Twenty years elapse, for Mr Caine is no pedant on the unities, and while David has grown into a first-class agitator, Roma—such is the name of the Princess—has taken Italy by storm. She is beautiful, she is wicked. Her abundant hair is raven-black, her complexion has a golden tint, her violet eyes have "a slight recklessness of expression." Nor is this all. She has *lived*—at least so says the English diplomatist, and "lived," as it turns out, with the Prime Minister of Italy. Now, Signor Bonelli, the Prime Minister, is a really admirable villain. We do not believe that the old Adelphi ever provided a better specimen, and that is high praise indeed. And when David Rossi in a public speech couples his name with the golden-tinted lady, the fat (so to say) is in the fire. The old-fashioned drama of Samson and Delilah begins again. Roma, thirsting for revenge, swears that she will shear the locks of David, and Bonelli grins horribly. But Roma falls in love with the man she is sworn to betray, marries him privately in Bonelli's despite, saves him from a charge of murder, and dies to leave him valiant and broken-hearted.

This brief outline does no justice to the quick invention and the poignant emotion of the book. The personages

A surfeit of emotions.

are a continual surprise to the reader; their names remain the same. David is always David, Roma is never anything but Roma. Yet they are seldom the same, for they change their views and their characters at a moment's notice. The churlish critic may murmur Inconsistency. But what does consistency matter, when a pleasing variety makes boredom impossible? On one page the stalwart David swears he will never look upon a woman. On the next "he had lifted her hand to his lips and was kissing it again and again." Nor is the lady far behind him. Upon page 106 Roma laughs to think "how little execution her gentleman's fusilade will make in this direction." On page 111 she has resolved to represent him in her celebrated fountain (of course she is a sculptor) as "John —the beloved disciple. That would fit him exactly. His mind was like a palace that is less beautiful in itself than for some monument of the past that is preserved within it." What an agreeable lightness this variety imparts to a book! You might get tired of David or of Roma, but Mr Caine doesn't give you the chance. He turns his characters inside out by a wizard's touch, and you read on with a new zest, wondering what will become of them on the morrow.

Splendid as Roma appears, we confess that we prefer David. The Admirable Crichton has been falling out of fashion, and here is he restored to us, finer than he was in Ouida's earliest romances. The socialist agitator goes hunting in the Campagna. Three times he rides his horse—"a high, strong-limbed sorrel, with wild eyes and panting nostrils"—at a wall. Three times the horse refused.

"The hunters had waited to watch the result"—we quote Mr Caine's words,—"and as the horse came up for a fourth trial, with its wild eyes flashing, its nostrils quivering, and its forelock tossed over one ear, it was seen that the bridle had broken and Rossi was riding with one rein. 'He'll be lucky if he isn't hurt,' said some

one. 'Why doesn't he give it the whip over its quarters?' said another. But David Rossi only patted his horse until it came to the spot where it had shied before. Then he reached over its neck on the side of the broken rein, and with open hand struck it sharply across the nose. The horse reared, snorted, and jumped, and at the next moment it was standing quietly on the other side of the wall."

Of course it was, and we are left thinking of our old friend Guy Livingstone. But the episode is not concluded. Said Sir Evelyn, "You handle a horse like a man who began early." "Yes," said David Rossi, "I was a stable-boy two years in New York." A noble reply, worthy of a hero, who, when the Countess (or the Princess) asked him whether he had before been at the Grand Hotel (where, by the way, Mr Caine informs us, the women are "clothed in diamonds"—cold and comfortless), declares that he has been a waiter there. In brief, this son of a Pope is a perfect hero, and it is positively cruel of Mr Caine not to have let him live happy ever after with his raven-haired, violet-eyed, golden-tinted, reckless, faithful Roma.

But if the last page disappoints us, we get plenty of emotion for our money. The hero and heroine pass their lives in the wildest transports. His "blood beats in stabs," while her throat is continually "throbbing." Now, "the muscles in his face quiver"; now, she is overcome by "a sense of suffocation"; and nothing can be more pleasing than these transports to those whose throats never throb, and whose muscles seldom quiver. But that, of course, is the great gift of the imaginative novelist: he takes us out of ourselves, and he bids us share the fruit of his erudition. Mr Caine has studied Rome profoundly, and he has given us the results of his study amiably sweetened. Thus, when a Princess explains the structure of the Opera House to a journalist, who must have been perfectly familiar with it, we overlook the absurdity, because we recognise that Mr Caine does not care to convey his instruction at first hand. Again, when a

high-born Italian lady exclaims, "How funny the men look in evening dress in the morning!" we know that Mr Caine is expressing not the lady's surprise, which she could not feel, but his own; and we thank him for it. We have been told that a certain chapter of the book was suppressed by the editor of a magazine. We have sought that chapter in vain, and we must protest in the name of letters against the editor's tyranny. That Mr Caine was guilty of impropriety we refuse to believe. He touches dangerous themes with a delicacy which Mr Pecksniff himself might have envied, and his book contains no page of offence. In conclusion, we owe Mr Caine our sincere thanks for beguiling our leisure with a romance of Italy. His characters are not wholly strange,—you might meet the most of them in Bloomsbury or Bedford Park. But he has chosen such names for them as arouse the dullest curiosity. The Egyptian donkey-drivers call their beasts Mr Gladstone, Mrs Langtry, and what not, and Mr Caine has followed an amiable example. His donkeys (if he will pardon the term) are all princes, kings, and popes, and it is only on reading his book that we discover the pleasantry.

The Egyptian pleasantry.

OCTOBER.

The cruel murder of McKinley.

THE cruel murder of William McKinley reminds us that Anarchy is still a living and a working terror. Not only was it cruel — it was purposeless, even for an anarchic outrage. The President of the United States represents neither privilege nor tyranny. He is not a ruler whose indolence the people is asked to support by unequal taxes; he is not the member of a sheltered family, which claims a high office by virtue of exalted birth. He is but a citizen, like the rest, and, as the world knows, the door of the White House stands open to all comers. Moreover there is no American so poor but he may arrive at the President's throne, upon which none ever sits without discovering that he is the servant, not the master, of the people. Nor is there any episode in McKinley's career which should condone or explain the act of vengeance. Throughout his double term of office he served his country by faithfully representing the majority. His policy of protection was popular, because it made America instantly prosperous. The war with Spain was not a war of his devising; had he been free to follow his own discretion he would have ensured peace by diplomacy or by gold. He was incapable of echoing such cries as "Remember the Maine!" or of appealing to the quickly roused hysteria of his countrymen. But no sooner was war inevitable than he assured its vigorous conduct, and so carried out with energy and effectiveness the will of the people. Nor was he following a personal inclination

when he committed America to a policy of imperialism. The expansion which has followed the war with Spain does but express the natural desire of a free and prosperous nation for an empire beyond its own borders. In brief, William McKinley accomplished nothing in his years of office which was not consonant with the wishes of the majority. He had so little of the dictator in his nature that he did not disdain to use the machinery of wards and bosses by which the politics of America are administered. And if his methods of government violated no popular principle, his career should have endeared him to all citizens of the States.

For if he could not boast, like Garfield, a passage "from log-cabin to White House," he was not aided in his progress by any advantages of birth or position. A post-office clerk when the war broke out, he volunteered for service, was a captain at twenty-one, and retired a major honourably distinguished by Abraham Lincoln. A few years of the law gave him a competence, and from the age of twenty-eight he pursued the profession of politics with single-minded energy. Of course it would be unkind, as well as unjust, to compare him with the heroic Presidents, Washington and Lincoln. He was never called upon to perform such feats as theirs. But whatever duty fell to him he accomplished with dignified simplicity. In the eyes of Europe he was the worthy representative of a great country. In the eyes of America he was a faithful unselfish champion of national interests. So scrupulous was he of his honour that he avoided the merest suspicion of speculation, and though he was thought by many to be unduly kind to trusts, he has died a poor man. His modest will, in truth, is an eloquent testimony to his upright conduct of affairs. Though he has enjoyed for many years the highest dignities of state, he leaves but a few thousands of pounds to his widow; and he has practised this splendid self-denial in a country which not only worships the

millionaire, but which finds Boss Croker an indispensable instrument of government.

The excuse of Anarchy.

If, then, we attempt to explain the murder of President McKinley by his actions, we involve ourselves in an impenetrable mystery. Nobody can pretend for an instant that this wise, simple, honourable, and modest citizen was a proper target for the assassin's bullet. Yet no sooner was the news of the cowardly outrage received, than the Radical papers began with one accord to make excuses for the miscreant, as they made excuses for Bresci, when he murdered the King of Italy. But President McKinley died not because he represented bad government, nor even because he represented government at all, and no radical commonplace can explain the cause or mitigate the effect of a foolish crime.

A guarded visitor.

And while McKinley has been assassinated, the Czar of Russia has visited France, a close prisoner guarded by forty thousand men. He was seen by few except soldiers, and though a love of symbolism may be satisfied by a dim consciousness that the Czar is there, the perilous expedition reduces to an absurdity the position of kings. Of what use is empire if it delivers him who wields it bound hand and foot to his jailers? Are loyal citizens so feeble that their wishes are always to be thwarted by an active minority? We do not believe they are, and surely the kingdoms of the earth need not surrender to knife and pistol without a struggle. Much may be done by concerted action, and if all nations persisted in moving Anarchists on, the danger would be sensibly lessened. When a riot is feared in the streets, the hopes of the rioters are easily foiled by a simple expedient. Nobody is permitted to stand still, and the collection of a crowd is thus impossible. Let us apply this sound principle to Anarchists. The most of them are known to the police. Let them be

driven from their homes; let them be forbidden to meet; and when they have found another domicile, let them be sent adrift again, until they renounce their superstition and take refuge in work. Murder being their game, it should be a sin to harbour them, as it is a sin to harbour the criminal who from greed or passion hopes to kill a helpless victim. No mercy should be shown them who show none to others, and not one single country—no Belgium nor Switzerland—should be allowed by the Powers to offer them protection. If this step were taken, we should hear little more of Anarchy, for the laziest, most brutal assassin shrinks from playing the part of the Wandering Jew.

The punishment of sedition.

But there are other means of checking this organised system of murder. The Anarchists, having no chin, and very little (when not too much) forehead, are easily led, and it should be the purpose of our rulers to ensure that they are not led at all. Their newspapers should be rigorously suppressed, nor should the police wait for an open declaration of murder before they seize their treasonable presses. But the suppression of a newspaper is a serious difficulty. If there is one thing in which enlightened people believe more devoutly than in "political crime," it is a free printing-press. Only one check is placed upon the ingenuity of our printers. So long as they are not obscene, any freedom seems permitted to them. Yet, dangerous as obscenity may be, no moralist can pretend that it does more harm than incitements to murder. Robespierre, we think, was a more loathsome criminal than the Marquis de Sade,—at any rate he had far more opportunity of wrong-doing; and if Anarchy is to be suppressed, we must put sedition on the same footing as obscenity. No Radical paper must be allowed to find excuses for Anarchy; no Republican editor must be permitted to condone the murder of kings. The censorship

which exists in law must be rigorously enforced in fact; and who knows but some day the Czar of Russia may leave his palace without trembling for his life?

However, it is not merely the prints which exist for sedition that are a menace to the State. Of late years the whole press of the world has claimed a dangerous and deplorable licence. It has been wisely pointed out that the Yellow Press of New York is not guiltless of McKinley's murder. The ignorant and youthful editors, who day after day have insulted the elected ruler of their country, have helped to arm the assassin's hand. Nor is there any doubt that our own press is similarly culpable. Anarchy, after all, is a form of hysteria, and to provoke hysteria is the avowed object of our modern journals. The newspaper which cannot be content without a daily sensation, which does not trouble to sift its news, and publicly makes truth of no account, is not guiltless of crime. The law protects it, that is true; but the opinion of all just men should fiercely condemn it. Nor is there any reason why the law should not control the press. If our enactments are not stringent enough, legislation is still possible. The worst is, that the press is a fetich, like political crime. Some fool invented the phrase "the fourth estate," and other fools have believed that the press is a decent and a definite power. Politicians, in fact, have so loyally supported the freedom of journalists to misguide, that one suspects an unconscious blackmail. Says the politician: "If I utter a word in the journalists' disfavour, they will all attack me in their privileged columns"; and so the politician is content to soothe himself with the generous dream that a free, untrammelled press is a noble institution. But why should it be noble? It owes responsibility to none save the purse. The constant excuse for its indiscretions is that it gives the public what the public wants—an excuse which is nothing more nor less than Anarchy. The public wants

The fetich of the Press.

a thousand things which the law properly withholds, and the journalist who shelters his sins behind the popular demand confesses himself the enemy of his country. He knows that Anarchy is a disease of the nerves, and yet he does not scruple by cunning methods of excitement to destroy the already weakened nerves of his foolish readers. The law, as we have said, might check the falsehood and hysteria of the press, as it might, if it chose, abolish it utterly. But the law, we fear, will never be moved against a newspaper. Any man who has no other virtue than a balance at his bank may buy a printing-machine; and with that implement of sin to help him, he may grow rich by deceiving a credulous people, which has not yet learned that all which it sees in print is not necessarily true.

Though we cannot silence the extravagant tone of our press, at least we may discourage it. But the fight will be fought against the fearsome odds of an innumerable circulation. What can a hundred or a thousand good men achieve in the face of a million dolts? They can decrease the precious circulation by a few; they can throw some discredit upon the disseminator of falsehood. Yet the victory cannot be won until there is a national reaction. The half-educated mob which the Board School turns out, ready for any villainy, will some day be ambitious to learn a little more, or content to learn a little less; and the popular press, with its unplumbed ignorance, its boastful readiness to rule the world, and its hideous familiarity, will disappear from our midst. For happily the pendulum of taste and opinion is wont to swing back, and time may rid us of a disease which our politicians are afraid to cure. Meanwhile we have witnessed the failure of popular government. The peoples which boast of universal suffrage, and which throw their palaces open to the lowliest-born, cannot protect the lives of their elect. France and America, indeed, are no better off than autocratic Russia. For while the Czar travels, the close

prisoner of forty thousand soldiers, Carnot and McKinley have fallen upon the citizens' field of battle, victims to the superstitions of free thought and "political crime."

France and England.

The visit of her "great ally" to the shores of France is a pleasant symbol of international friendship, which no other nation will contemplate with suspicion. Least of all need England withhold such congratulation as France expects. The rumours of Franco-Russian interference in South Africa are the common inventions of a sensational press, and if MM. Rochefort and Drumont find it useful to insult England, let us remember that they find it useful also to insult France. There is, indeed, and has always been, a curious contradiction in the sentiments which unite (or dissever) England and France. Even when political ambitions have divided us, the Channel has not for long separated our intellectual interests. Since the fifteenth century our literatures have followed the same (or a similar) line of development. Now we have given the lead, now we have taken it; and though the giants on either side the Channel have escaped imitation, the arts of England and France have been and are closely allied. The first inspiration came from France, where Chaucer, travelling in the train of princes, learned the first lessons of his art; and how great was the debt we may realise when we reflect what English literature would have been without the supreme example of the 'Canterbury Tales' in poetry as in narrative. Shakespeare, though he has since been discovered by the journalists of France, appeared even to Voltaire as a barbarian, pretty much indeed as Walt Whitman appears to us. But this lack of appreciation may easily be explained. Shakespeare is the English genius incarnate, stern, fateful, and difficult in expression. The French are as puzzled at his bold presentation of the elemental emotions as at his unclipped luxuriance of illustration. But, on the other hand, Englishmen most

doggedly misunderstand the masterpieces of Racine, whose logical order, symmetrical verse, and well-arranged emotions appear vapid to their romantic temperament. However, when we returned to the cult of "good sense" we returned in the wake of France, and Pope and Bolingbroke, to name but these, both felt a foreign influence. But in revenge the Romantic movement, which created the literature of modern Europe, was English alike in origin and thought, and Paris, which had already bowed the knee to Richardson, loyally acknowledged the influence of Sir Walter Scott. Then came Balzac and Dumas, who repaid the debt a thousandfold; and it is pleasant to think that the two countries of Europe, who have most often met as honourable foes upon the field of battle, have pursued the art of letters with the same ambition and to the same end.

A treaty of literature.

But most strange is it that to-day, when political rancour is at its bitterest, England and France should have signed a closer treaty of literature than ever was signed before. The barriers of sea and language seem to have been broken down. The ancient prejudices, so dear to Victor Hugo, survive only in such unimportant persons as M. Sardou, who does not know where England is, and who is quite sure that he would hate it if he saw it. Even the splendid ignorance which Frenchmen cherished of England for so many centuries is wellnigh abolished, and England and France can exchange intelligent criticism in the consciousness that only a few hours and not many shillings separate their capitals. It may be said without boasting that all educated Englishmen can read French. Balzac and Flaubert, Zola and Daudet, are familiar to us all; and stranger still, the names of English writers are to-day better known in France than ever they were. Our policy is denounced every day in the French journals as a policy of bandits; the leader-writer of the cheap press,

as ignorant in Paris as in London, emulates the sublime folly of M. Sardou, and abuses the country of which he proudly boasts he knows nothing. That is in the old spirit of Victor Hugo. But the more intelligent writers of France know perfectly well what is being said and thought in London. Mr Meredith is familiar, at least in name, to hundreds of Parisians. He is not understood, nor will he be, until he be translated; but a French version of 'The Egoist' is imminent, and we may yet detect his influence in the next generation of French novelists. Meantime Pater is known in all the *cénacles*, while Stevenson and Kipling, if they have missed a popular success, have conquered a new continent of readers. But, apart from translation, a better understanding of English literature has been made possible by intelligent criticism. English literature owes a debt of gratitude to M. Davray, who in the columns of the 'Mercure de France' has told the cultured ones of Paris what to think of English writers. It is a thankless task to explain to an indifferent audience the merits of a literature which the majority cannot read. Yet M. Davray has fulfilled the duty of interpretation with a tact and a sympathy which are beyond praise. And he has not stayed his hand at criticism. He has backed his fancy, so to say, and translated a whole library of English books into an elegant French, which the originals do not always merit.

M. André Chevrillon.

In fact, France is wiping away the old reproach that even her critics know no word of English. And while in the world of politics Anglophobia is more violently rampant than ever, in the world of letters a mild Anglomania is universally tolerated. But understanding is always more precious than admiration, and we have seen no book of late which pleases us better than M. André Chevrillon's 'Études Anglaises.' Now, M. Chevrillon is evidently a disciple of Taine, and therefore a philosopher. His appreciation

of the English language is remarkable, and we doubt whether the master, accomplished as he was in taking large views, ever understood the delicate shades as accurately as the pupil. M. Chevrillon discusses Kipling and the war with equal facility. Here, at last, is a Frenchman who can speak of the English and the Boers without an explosion of ignorant fury, and the moderation is a wholesome sign for the future. Nor is M. Chevrillon's temper the less significant because he is not wholly sympathetic. He does not see, what his master would have grasped at once, that the arguments advanced on one side or the other are unimportant—that the English and Boers are fighting, not for the franchise, not for the gold-mines, but for national supremacy. Kruger's armaments were collected to be used, and no sooner had the famous piano-cases travelled north than war was inevitable. This the acute M. Taine would have seen; this M. Chevrillon just misses, as he omits also to point out the worthlessness of the journals which he quotes, posters and all, as symptoms of English opinion. None the less, his essay is remarkable, since it is written by a Frenchman; and if only M. Chevrillon's compatriots would read this intelligent book we should have a certain confidence that more than one dark corner of ignorance would be effectively illuminated.

A French Journalist.

But nowadays even the journalists of France understand English, and here is M. Legras offering his opinion with easy confidence. His book, 'Chez nos Contemporains d'Angleterre,' is pert, assured, and half-intelligent. Of course M. Legras does not look below the surface, and his taste does not permit him to take just views. But he has looked at the 'Contemporains' whom he discusses, and though he misunderstands the works of most, he has still a vague notion of their meaning. His mistakes, in fact, are not the mistakes of the Frenchman, but of the journalist.

What he says of Mr Meredith might have been said by the most British of Fleet Streeters. He does not understand the author of 'The Egoist,' and being a journalist he thinks that the misunderstanding is not his fault, but Mr Meredith's. The truth is, that while M. Legras understands English, he does not understand literature, and therefore his book is merely interesting because it shows that there are Frenchmen to-day who dare not only cross the Channel, but are not afraid to approach the threshold of our speech. M. Legras would probably criticise the writers of France with as little intelligence as he brings to the consideration of English literature. There is more humour than he knows in the pronouncement that Mr Lang "disdains the living and dramatic presentation of facts, dear to M. Filon." The juxtaposition is admirable. Mr Lang is a master of style as well as a historian, while M. Filon is a gentleman who has spent many years in misunderstanding the country wherein he lives, and who cannot be complimented upon the elegance of his language. But M. Legras gives the best measure of his talent in an appendix, in which he sets out to prove that 'Little Arthur's History of England' and some other text-books do less than justice to Duguesclin, and rather more than justice to Wellington. "I hope," says he, "to furnish on this subject a serious document." Alas! he only furnishes a proof that he himself lacks humour. The school-books of no country are eminent for accuracy, and "Little Arthur" may be forgiven if the Black Prince is of more interest to him than Duguesclin. Doubtless "le petit Pierre" finds more entertainment in Duguesclin, and we should never blame his preference. But M. Legras need not despair of England, nor of "Little Arthur," whom on this side the Channel we scarcely know. He has only to study the school-books of his own country, especially those prepared under the auspices of the Church, and he may be brought to believe,

by a process of reaction, with the "Student's Hume," that Marlborough really did win the battle of Blenheim. But this "serious document" is of no importance. What is important is that France, despite the hatred of her politicians, is gaining a clearer knowledge of English literature, and is expressing her opinion without rancour and without intemperance.

NOVEMBER.

THE one lesson of the war is the need of efficiency—in men, in arms, in generalship. Before all parties, before all policies, stands the imperative duty of Army reform. We must lack nothing which shall protect our colonies and, in the last resort, defend our own shores. Neither false economy nor private pique can be allowed to interfere with the safeguard of the country. What matters it that we pack our Treasury and flatter all our general officers to amiability if, with the enemy at our door, the defences of England are not perfect? It boots little that a large surplus is there to be given the invader; it boots less that the keys of London are surrendered by a soldier, who has no fault to find with the War Office. No matter what the cost be in money and temper, the Army must be reformed; and the country which has given the present Government a free hand will be content with nothing less than efficiency.

The need of efficiency.

At the beginning of last session the Government was rich in promises. A Royal Commission, most wisely chosen, was appointed to examine the working of the War Office. Its suggestions were admirable, and worthy the men of business who made them; but a Royal Commission is little better than a conscience-soother, and we shall be better satisfied when the suggestions are duly applied. Nor was Mr Brodrick idle: he brought forward a scheme, adversely criticised it is true, but a scheme, nevertheless, which shone with one ray of hope. No general, it was promised, would be appointed to the

command of an army corps in time of peace who was not fit to command in time of war. Here, at least, was a guarantee that, if we were ever called upon to take the field, our commanding officers would not merely be competent, but would be linked to the Army by the bond of familiar sympathy. And among the first generals appointed to the command of an army corps were Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Evelyn Wood.

The appointment of Sir Redvers Buller.

As a masterpiece of cynicism this could hardly be outdone. Almost a year ago Sir Redvers returned from Africa with more than one black mark against his name in despatches; and even if Sir Evelyn were not afflicted by deafness, he is not the officer who above all others commands the confidence of the Army. The reason of the appointments is profoundly mysterious; but whatever it may be, it is a reason wholly unconnected with military efficiency. Probably it will be said in defence that these two generals have been chosen to stop a gap; that as the pick of our officers are still in South Africa with the army corps, it does not matter very much who command at home, provided that they have a fair knowledge of the War Office. It may be argued that for some time to come the chief duty of Sir R. Buller and Sir E. Wood will be to despatch fresh drafts from Aldershot and Salisbury, and that until the Army comes back its reorganisation is impossible. This excuse is sound in its way. If Sir Redvers and Sir Evelyn are mere stop-gaps, it matters little. If there are no army corps, perhaps it is immaterial who commands them. But Mr Brodrick has not offered this explanation, and his statement leaves us no room to doubt that if we went to war to-morrow the two army corps would be commanded by Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Evelyn Wood. Now, in the speech incautiously delivered by Sir Redvers Buller some weeks since, he complained, very properly, of inexpert criticism. He declared with absolute truth that the Press had not

given the Army fairplay,—that it had blamed the slightest incident which looked like a failure, without adequate knowledge of the officer's intention or difficulty. The effect of such criticism upon the officers in command is obvious: if the loss of a dozen men is to be described as a crime in the newspapers, the bravest officer may be forgiven if now and again he is beset by timidity. "If I sacrifice a handful of men," says he to himself, "I gain a certain advantage; on the other hand I am held up to ridicule, as Gough was held up, by ignorant critics." The answer to this is simple: a British officer is so far superior to the Press that its criticism cannot and should not touch him. He has no more to do than obey orders, and serve his country in the best way he can. At any rate, he need admit no journal within his quarters, and can show himself resolutely indifferent to an irresponsible judgment. That the critics have prolonged the war is quite possible; but it may be remembered that the blameworthy critics have not all been civilians. We have heard of generals, fresh from the dust and heat of the campaign, delivering harangues; and until the War Office imposes a dignified silence upon all officers, it cannot check the chatter of Fleet Street.

A famous despatch.

But there are two episodes in the career of Sir Redvers Buller, duly censured by the Commander-in-Chief, which render him unfit for a high command.[1] The famous despatch now printed in the Blue-Book is familar to all, yet our readers may once more be reminded of its terms. "On the 6th of February," writes the Field-Marshal, Lord Roberts, "I received a telegram from Sir Redvers Buller, reporting that he had pierced the enemy's line, and could hold the hill which divided their position; but that to drive back the enemy on either flank, and thus give his own artillery access to

[1] As we go to press it is officially announced that the Commander-in-Chief has recommended that Sir Redvers Buller be relieved of his command, and that he has been placed on half-pay.

the Ladysmith plain, ten miles from Sir George White's position, would cost him from 2000 to 3000 men, and success was doubtful. General Buller inquired if I thought that the chance of relieving Ladysmith was worth such a risk. On the same day I replied that Ladysmith must be relieved, even at the cost anticipated. I urged Sir Redvers Buller to persevere, and desired him to point out to his troops that the honour of the Empire was in their hands, and to assure them that I had no doubt whatever of their being successful." But despite the clear order and the splendid encouragement, Sir Redvers decided to make no attack, and to take the honour of the Empire out of their hands. "I withdrew my men," said he, "because I thought that they could not get through; and I would not lose a man unless I could get something for it." Yet the same man now declares that, in the present situation of affairs, "every single man who risks men and loses men, so long as he kills one Boer, ought to be praised by the Press, and not blamed." That is true to-day, but never at any time was the necessity of striking a brave and reckless blow greater than it was before Ladysmith. "Ladysmith must be relieved, even at the cost anticipated"—such is the unmistakable declaration of Lord Roberts; and it is difficult to understand how General Buller shrank from the execution of so definite an order. Inside Ladysmith 10,000 troops were shut up, and Sir Redvers hesitated to risk 2000 or 3000 for their relief. But inaction was not his worst fault. So certain was he that the beleaguered garrison could not hold out, that he "spatchcocked" a sentence into a telegram addressed to Sir George White, suggesting that it might be necessary to destroy his cipher, disable his guns, and surrender with all his troops. It is not pleasant to think upon, and even though Sir George White did not take the chance offered by the "spatchcocked" sentence, we cannot contemplate without despair what the result might have been had Sir Redvers Buller conducted

the operations after his own guise; nor can we accept it as a proof of reckless courage that he "had in his pocket the very telegram in which he was ordered to do something which would have involved the loss of 2000 or 3000 men."

But it was not at Colenso alone that General Buller sank before the great opportunity. The blunder of Spion Kop is still unexplained, and again we have Lord Roberts' criticism on which to rely. Sir Charles Warren, we are told, did not visit Spion Kop during the afternoon or evening; but "whatever faults Sir Charles Warren may have committed"—we quote Lord Roberts' own words—"the failure must also be ascribed to the disinclination of the officer in supreme command to exert his authority and see that what he thought best was done." With this criticism in our minds—and it is not the criticism of an inexpert journalist—we cannot confidently intrust the first army corps to Sir Redvers Buller. No officer ever led his men to victory who did not insist upon the supreme command, and who did not see that that was done which he thought best. In brief, the publication of the papers relating to Spion Kop finally shook the authority of General Buller, and either they should have been suppressed or Sir Redvers should not have been invited to a command.

A damaging speech.

But as though the despatches of Lord Roberts were insufficient, Sir Redvers Buller must needs make a speech, the lamentable indiscretion of which is a still more damaging criticism. We can say nothing kinder of it than that it brings to our mind the Dreyfus case, with its absurd array of spies and veiled ladies. Last February Sir Redvers received a letter from a personage more mysterious than respectable, whom he describes as an "international detective." An old man he was, and he had been "at the game all his life." For some reason which does not appear, he visited Sir Redvers at Aldershot, where he told him many curious stories,

and finally revealed the existence of a plot whose invention was worthy the great Paty du Clam. "'Look here,' said the mysterious stranger; 'you have enough money to live on; give up the Aldershot command.' I said, 'Thank you very much, but I do not know that I need.' I asked why, and he answered, 'You have got enemies—not exactly enemies, but men who mean to get you out of the way, and they will do so. You had better get out of the way quietly and happily.'" The incident of the international spy is merely grotesque, but it is interesting because it proves that Sir Redvers Buller has but a rudimentary knowledge of human nature. Now, a general must before all things be a student of men; he must understand intuitively the temper and talent of the opponents whom he meets in the field. Of two generals he is more likely to win the victory who sees the strength and weakness of his enemy's character, for it is this knowledge of character which enables a soldier to anticipate what his antagonist will do, and to provide for it. But how shall we call him a profound student of men who is not ashamed to avow his belief in "international spies," and to charge the 'Times' and 'Spectator' with conspiracy?

Sir Redvers Buller, then, lacks a knowledge of mankind. He lacks also the humour which generally accompanies that knowledge; but he best proves his inefficiency by his style. To compare his despatches with the despatches of Lord Roberts is to realise the difference between a soldier and a sentimentalist. General Buller sent no word home that was not a fear or a regret. The temper of the people did not expect an apology: whatever news Sir Redvers had to give us would have been received with courage and resolution. Yet General Buller's despatches deserved no other epithet than "whinings," the epithet which Wellington used contemptuously of his generals in the Peninsula. But undignified as are his despatches, in the

The style and the Man.

speech delivered recently at the Queen's Hall Sir Redvers gave a yet looser rein to his fancy. He ascribed his failure at Colenso to rank bad luck. "It was the hottest day of the whole year," he says, "and I had rank bad luck. I still believe, and hope to show later on, that if I had not had bad luck I had enough men to get in." Now, a general's business is to control his luck—what is good luck but foresight?—or to forget it. To bring it forward months after as an excuse is enough to wear down the proudest confidence, since nothing weakens a leader's influence so speedily as the confession that fortune fights not on his side. But it is not so much the substance of this statement, though that is bad enough, to which we object. It is the jaunty method of speech. Still more improper is the use of "spatchcocked," especially on an occasion of stern solemnity. If a man's style corresponds even remotely with his feeling and temperament, so grave a story as that of Sir Redvers Buller's telegram should have been told with simple dignity. Yet, facing the reporters, he chattered of sieges and battles, upon whose conduct depended the fate of the Empire, in the off-hand slangy style of the Club smoking-room, and we are glad to think that our annals do not show a worse example of official flippancy.

Sir Redvers Buller, therefore, not only by the verdict of the Commander-in-Chief but by his own confession, is not the best general whom the War Office could have appointed to the command of the First Army Corps; but it is not General Buller's fault that an injustice has been done to the country. The appointment was not of his making, and we cannot reproach any man with accepting an office higher than his talent warrants. The Government is wholly and solely culpable. Mr Brodrick has no need to flatter or conciliate any one. It is not his business to find out which course it is easiest to pursue; he has but one simple duty: to ensure that the Empire is invulnerable within and without. That which in a

private citizen is an amiable virtue becomes in a public servant the worst of crimes. It was no doubt agreeable to the War Office to give Sir Redvers a kind of consolation prize, and to see that the distribution of rewards left no one disappointed. But the disappointment of one general or of ten is nothing compared to the safety of the country, to guard which is the army's only function. And deplorable as seems Mr Brodrick's action from this point of view, it is yet more deplorable because it is a symptom of a prevailing disease. The present Government unhappily suffers from a disease which is without cause, and would we could say without effect! On paper the strongest Government of modern times, it is paralysed by a weakness which has rendered it almost inactive. With a safe majority at its back, it fumbles feebly at the passage of its own measures, as though it were anxious not to express its own assured view, but to conciliate the whims of the minority. And this weakness is more blameworthy because the Government holds, and could retain if it would, the complete confidence of the country.

The timidity of the Government.

The opinion expressed at the last General Election was unmistakable. The people proved by its vote that it wanted a vigorous policy, and that it was ready to pay for it. The Government had nothing to do but to turn its eyes away from the constituencies, and to conduct the affairs of the country in a spirit of large enthusiasm and determined courage. It would only have gained by acting upon its own responsibility, for if popular government means anything at all, it means a free and frank delegation of authority. The people can do no more than indicate the men who, it desires, shall be its governors. Even if it knows what reform is necessary, it must leave the work of initiation and design to the Government; and the Government for its part must have the courage to do what it thinks right, without consulting the country

more often than the conditions of political life compel. Lord Rosebery, in a speech delivered at Birmingham, declared that if reforms are wanted the nation must lead in them; but this is to mistake the relations which bind the Government to the people. A statesman is something better than a vestryman. Satisfied with the general confidence of his constituents, he is free to plan and carry into effect whatever measures seem good to him: indeed the statesman of genius need remember those to whom he owes his power only when he goes down to solicit their votes. To throw back responsibility on the people which deputes it is in a statesman the supreme act of cowardice, as well as a plain guarantee of inefficiency. Yet this shrinking from authority is the gravest fault of the present Government: bitten with the desire to please, and amiably to flatter the last suppliant, it has ended in displeasing even its own friends. Nor can we explain the constant interest which the Government, defying the traditions of its party, takes in the opinion of the country, unless it be the influence of Birmingham.

Tolstoi translated.

Mrs Garnett has already displayed her skill in the translation of Turgenev; but her version of Tolstoi, of which 'Anna Karenin' (London: Heinemann & Co.), the first instalment, has been published, is a far more difficult project. Whether the style of Tolstoi be more complicated than that of Turgenev we know not, but surely Mrs Garnett's later work is far more closely involved than her former. None the less we are exceedingly grateful to her, since she has given us for the first time the complete and workmanlike version of a masterpiece, and has afforded us a chance to renew our acquaintance with the greatest novelist of the age. It is a commonplace that the most of men have a dual nature, but no one ever lived two lives so distantly separate as those which have made Count Tolstoi famous. On the one hand he is an artist,

on the other he is a fanatic. The present generation knows him best as a preacher of impossible dogmas, as a pietist who deems renunciation the first and last duty of man, and who looks with a kind of guilty regret upon the brilliant works of earlier years. It is unlikely that his gospel will ever be more than the sport of cranks and interviewers. The excellence of manual labour, a favourite article of his faith, is disputed by no one, while his communism has been tried and has failed too often to be of interest or importance. But the very simplicity of his fanaticism would be engaging, if it had not been made common by the newspapers; for Count Tolstoi is that rarest of creatures—a fanatic who has lived. If he believes to-day that a primitive life is best for us all, he has arrived at that belief by proving to his own satisfaction that most other lives are unsatisfying. He is a noble, he has great estates, he has served in a distinguished regiment; yet he now sees no beauty save in the life of the peasants who till the soil, who sow the grain, and who reap the harvest. But his fanaticism will pass and be forgotten with other systems of the same kind; his masterpieces of fiction will guard their niche in the temple of fame for all time.

His independence of schools.

To attach him to this school or that would be an impertinence, since, indeed, he seems to have fashioned his own method. For such mechanical contrivances as the novelists call plot or construction you will look in vain in his pages. He is not a professed psychologist, though he pierces deeper than most into human character. He makes no claim to realism, though he is always closer to the truth than the rhapsodical M. Zola. But he exhibits the characters of his personages as much in deed as in thought: he does not analyse their motives as does Turgenev; he prefers that their qualities, either good or evil, should be displayed in action. For this reason

he packs his canvas full of figures. He attains his effects by a mass of details introduced into a vast space. Some of them, at a first reading, may seem superfluous; but there are few which do not add a new touch to the portrait, or show a character in a new light before his friends or foes. And it is this method which creates the impression of realism. In reading such works as 'Anna Karenin' or 'Peace and War' you seem to be confronted not by fiction but by life. There are no jerky "curtains" to disturb the illusion; the chapters do not end upon a note of interrogation, designed to force the interest on to another page. The plot develops itself as does life, simply, inevitably, and without accent; and in accord with this simplicity the characters are rarely either above or below the stature of men. That is to say, Tolstoi deals neither with giants nor pigmies. His characters are not grotesquely sombre, like Dostoievsky's; nor grotesquely humorous, like the characters of Dickens. They are, indeed, merely the men and women that he has encountered in his career—nobles and peasants, statesmen, sportsmen, and soldiers. And here we may note the result of an aristocratic prejudice: for him the vast middle class does not exist. Even the lawyer in 'Anna Karenin' is not treated quite seriously; when he is not enunciating foolish platitudes in a pompous style, he is catching moths to save his rep curtains.

His impartiality

With this limitation Tolstoi knows the world of Russia intimately, and he pictures it with a philosophic calm and impartiality which should belong to the perfect realist. But, the critic may object, his books have no construction. Nor has Life; and though you might leave out half of 'Peace and War,' or 'Anna Karenin,' without destroying its meaning, there is still more in Life, at whose significance we cannot guess. Again objects the critic, the artist should select no more than is useful to his purpose. But Tolstoi only differs from other novelists in that he selects

with a more generous hand. He is no symbolist attempting to represent the world in a blade of grass; rather he sets Life impartially before you, and leaves you to draw your own conclusions.

and its limits.

But there is one limit even to Tolstoi's impartiality. Though he holds the scales of justice with an even hand, though he looks with hatred upon none of his personages, though even Karenin in his eyes (and in ours) is redeemed from contempt, he is still partial where he himself is concerned. In other words, he cannot keep himself out of his books, and in some subtle fashion lets you know when fiction turns to autobiography. There is little doubt that in the vacillant, magnanimous, simple-hearted Levin he is drawing his own character, not with any slavish accuracy in fact, but with a perfect fidelity to thought. The actions of Levin may not have been Tolstoi's; the opinions of the two men (one is sure) are always identical. So, too, we detect the author in the valiant Peter, a hero in the heroic 'Peace and War.' But while these resemblances are intuitive, as it were, the student may judge how much Tolstoi borrowed from his own experience, if he will study his 'Memoirs,' and compare their incidents with the incidents of his two great romances.

To give an impression of his gallery would be impossible, but surely no artist ever boasted so noble an array of portraits. Prince Andry is the noblest gentleman known to fiction, and though none save the greatest can draw a gentleman, it is not only by this supreme test that Tolstoi excels: he has depicted gamblers and men about town with a clairvoyant sympathy which comes of experience alone. His Cossacks are living heroes; and Turgenev, with all his sympathy with young Russia, never saw so deep into the peasant's mind as Tolstoi. He has unfolded war with all its accessories of splendour, courage, and passion in a grandiose panorama. In 'Ivan Iliitch' he has softened by his art the common,

hopeless horror of death; and he has done all this with so deep a knowledge of human nature, with so fine a sympathy with human weakness, that he can rank only with the great ones of the earth. Such is Tolstoi the artist, and as for Tolstoi the fanatic, we may leave him to other fanatics, who, not having his genius, are proud to ape his folly. But all the fanaticism in the world cannot recall or abolish a published masterpiece, and not even the indecent folly of the 'Kreutzer Sonata' can dim the brilliancy of 'Peace and War.'

DECEMBER.

THE last two years have been, for England, years of poignant and recurrent emotion. It is not our habit to wear our hearts upon our sleeves; we are not wont to parade our feelings in the eye of the world. The episodes which the hasty pro-Boer is wont to call "reverses" have left us impassive; and the French reporter who was hustled over to London in the early days of the war, that he might describe a state of hare-brained panic, was disappointed both of copy and applause. But we have risen enthusiastically to every great occasion, and shown that we also can appreciate justified and appropriate display. Procession has followed procession with frequent solemnity; grief and joy have both been publicly recognised and expressed; and we guard a memory not only of pride and sorrow, but of the pageantry which symbolised these high emotions.

Two years of emotion.

And now another note is struck, a note of peaceful triumph. London has thronged the streets once again, this time to welcome the Duke of York on his return from an adventurous journey. The journey was devised by Queen Victoria, that the bonds which bind our colonies to the mother country might be strengthened, and this purpose has been worthily achieved. Not that there are any broken links in the chain of affection which holds our great empire, for never in our history has a common danger bound sentiment and interest more closely together. Our empire, if it was not won by the sword, has been guarded

A peaceful triumph.

by the sword; and it is but fitting that the Duke of York should visit the domains over which he will be called to govern, at the moment when those domains have repaid the mother country for her care by blood and sympathy. Nor is it only the aid which we have received from our colonies in the Boer war that made the season of the Duke's visit peculiarly appropriate. It was his privilege to open the first parliament of a new Commonwealth on the other side the world. It was under his auspices that Australia declared herself one united nation, and how could England better offer her word of congratulation than by a graceful act of friendship? Moreover, the visit was in perfect accord with our tradition. We have held our colonies not by compulsion but by inclination. The other nations of the old world send forth their pioneers, in whose wake tramp policemen and postmen, and all the invariable symbols of an older civilisation. France and Germany discover deserts, and with the aid of flags and uniforms call them provinces. They impose upon the sparse inhabitants the laws which belong to an ancient code, and then they wonder that their success does not equal ours. Now, freedom is the basis of English colonisation,—freedom to live and legislate as best suits the conditions of a new country. The Union-Jack may float over another Parliament, but the laws passed beneath it are not suggested, though they may be ratified, in London. The *ditio* commemorated in the new title of our King is a word rather than a reality, and for this reason there is the less likelihood of a falling-away. The Duke of York, then, in visiting the dominions of his father across the sea, performed a graceful act of friendship, which explains more clearly than pages of argument the sentiment which binds the colonies to our sea-girt isle.

It is an achievement of which he and all Englishmen may be proud. What Prince ever before had to travel 45,000 miles that he might visit his subjects? The dis-

tance alone should make us pray that the evil eye be averted; yet in the moment of our triumph we need not fear for the future. One sentiment alone has ever held an empire together—the sentiment of loyalty. If loyalty be absent, no force of arms, no fleet—be it the greatest in the world—can compel the submission of a distant and unanimous colony. But in all corners of our dominions a frank and honest loyalty greeted the Duke. He saw strange lands and strange races; he listened to diverse tongues, and witnessed the survival of many an ancient custom. He heard the speeches of Maori chiefs and of Red Indians. He conversed with his own kin in Australia and New Zealand; in Canada he heard a loyal affection expressed both in English and French, and he discovered no more devoted subjects than the descendants of those who once bowed the knee to King Louis. If this be a great experience for a Prince, it is also a source of pride for us who sit at home and watch with jealous eyes the progress of history. Nor is England unmindful of the service which the Duke of York has thus simply and valiantly rendered. If he be not eloquent, at least he has proved that he possesses the gift of tactful speech; and while he has brought home an assurance of affection, he has left behind him a memory which will unite for ever all those whose sympathies and interests are cherished in common.

A proud achievement.

His greeting was not unworthy the occasion. His progress through London was marked by a general and spontaneous enthusiasm. The crowd welcomed the traveller with a simple sincerity which appealed to all spectators, and which was a proper recognition of a pleasant, if arduous, duty, most efficiently performed. Last of all, it was a happily arranged compliment both to himself and to our colonies that he who went upon his journey the Duke of York should be rewarded at his return with the auguster title of the Prince of Wales. Yet the success of

The trace of the snail.

the mission is not agreeable, we gather, to our neighbours. There is always a snail ready to leave his slimy trace upon the well-earned bays. We are informed by the gentleman who "does" the foreign politics for the 'Débats,' and whose ignorance has frequently entertained us, that the Duke of York's journey was a failure, because he addressed the French-speaking Canadians in his own native tongue. How the Duke's perfectly correct behaviour endangers the Empire the gentleman, whose horizon is bounded by the wall of his office, does not explain. Does he think that because the Duke acted with propriety the French-speaking Canadians will shake off the British yoke and elect to be governed by those statesmen who a few years back cheerfully submerged their own land in a military scandal? And will the Maoris also revolt because the Duke did not address them in their own language? Of course the gentleman of the 'Débats' knows naught of history or of political courtesy. Nor does he seem to be aware that a perfect equality of speech is the most dearly cherished privilege of Canada. French or English is admitted everywhere without disadvantage to either, and the Duke spoke English to the Canadians of Quebec as naturally and reasonably as they spoke French to him. It is no wonder that the French fail to colonise, when they do not understand that a cordial interchange of languages is the symbol of freedom; and if they imagine that their journalist's ill-considered words will breed disaffection, they are hugely mistaken. Have they so soon forgotten the plain speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who, if he did not flatter them, at least spoke a tongue which they all understood? However, as we have said, the snail is always ready to crawl, and fortunately the slime which he leaves is easily effaced. In brief, the gentleman of the 'Débats' is merely expressing a vague petulance. He writes without knowledge and without conviction. A mere hatred of England takes the place in his mind of learning,

reason, and justice. But, strangely enough, in the late campaign of slander the Germans have easily outdone the French. Not only is their language viler, but their regard for truth is less: they appear to have tossed their northern caution to the winds. Renan once said that the Germans beat the French because the Germans were more profoundly versed in philosophy. If he read the blusterings of the Anglophobe press, he would surely be of good heart, and believe that the *revanche* was more than half achieved.

The management of processions.

But the opinions of the Continent are immaterial, and what is of greater interest to us is that the return of the Duke of York was marked, as so many events have been marked during the past two years, by an outburst of popular enthusiasm. There is no doubt that the love of processions has seized hold upon us. Yet it is not wholly a new love. In the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth a progress was at once the duty and the pleasure of a monarch. Elizabeth herself visited the remotest corner of her country, until her aspect was strange to few of her subjects, and this habit of free intercourse was not broken until the House of Hanover introduced less genial manners. Even then London was not without its interludes of splendour, especially when George IV. sat upon the throne; for parsimony was not among that monarch's faults, and not even the indifference of the crowd chilled his love of gold coaches and military splendour. But for the last forty years pageants have been all too rarely seen in London. There were the Queen's Jubilees to emphasise more strongly the prevailing greyness; but it was only with the war that we insisted upon all the ceremony and enthusiasm which a moment of high endeavour and gallant enterprise suggests. And as yet our talent for parade does not equal our intention. We have not the tact of stage-management which distinguishes the French. In our processions too much is left to chance; the details

are but summarily arranged; everybody is allowed to set his own pace, to find his own position. The result is natural rather than artistic; the effects are not so much displayed as huddled; and you have only to cross the Channel on a great occasion to note an inevitable contrast. A procession in Paris is a single and consistent work of art. It is distinguished by delicate spacing as well as by splendour of colour. Great men are separated by a proper pause, and the crowd is not glutted by an over-rapid series of excitements. But skill, no doubt, will follow the habit, and now that spectacles are popular in London, taste and forethought, let us hope, will temper our spontaneous enthusiasm to order and beauty.

Radicalism new and old.

So the Duke of York rode back through London amidst the plaudits of his countrymen, and not even the voice of Radicalism was raised in envious protest. For Radicalism has changed during the last century, and though it still hates the fatherland, it assumes a cloak of respect for the reigning house. Now, such a man as William Hazlitt would have set down the congratulation of a prince as the mere act of a slave, for he, the sturdiest Radical of his time, had as little love of courts as of colonies. The sympathies of Sir Walter Scott were, in his eyes, the mark of a servile mind, and he ranked patriotism among the meaner vices. But he was in all respects a far wiser and better man than the pro-Boers of to-day. In the first place, he was a man of letters; in the second, he did not spend his days in the slander of innocent men, and in the purposed suppression of the truth. He was a good hater always, and a good fighter: he hated openly, and he fought fairly. Nevertheless, his opinions are matter of regret, because they have too long obscured his very real merits. To his own age he was, for the most part, an acid controversialist, a Cockney scribbler, whom the spirited Dr Maginn thought beneath his notice. Yet all the while

he was neither Cockney nor scribbler. He has analysed the folly of Cockneydom with a brilliance which should have absolved him instantly from the false charge; and he was so little a scribbler that he has left behind him a dozen volumes of admirable literature. But the violent expression of his opinions overshadowed his talent while he lived, and though he has never lacked partisans, he has not yet received justice from a generation which bears no grudge against his Radicalism. At last a tardy monument is raised in his honour, the best of all monuments — a complete edition,[1] handsomely printed, accurately edited, and prefaced by an eloquent and well-deserved eulogy. The eulogy is from the pen of Mr W. E. Henley, who cannot be suspected of a secret sympathy with Hazlitt's views; and it is, therefore, all the more valuable a testimony to Hazlitt's genius. It is a model of clear and concise biography, and it is written with the "gusto" which in Hazlitt's eyes was the supreme virtue of the artist. At last, then, justice is done to the memory of a bitterly maligned man, and we may consider the admirable work achieved by William Hazlitt in the most sumptuous of editions and without rancour.

William Hazlitt.

None the less, it is worth while to consider how it was that Hazlitt appeared to his contemporaries a man of "churling passion," who was united to no man save Lamb in the bonds of friendship. Politics and a theory of life were no doubt at the bottom of it. By ancestry and by inclination Hazlitt was a Radical Dissenter, who believed that conformity with anything was the vilest sin, and that the French Revolution was the finest blow ever struck in freedom's cause. Thus he cherished in his boyhood wild, generous dreams of happiness and equality, which in his maturity he would have converted into realities. For his narrow

[1] The Complete Works of William Hazlitt in Twelve Volumes. Edited by A. R. Waller and A. Glover. With a Preface by W. E. Henley. Vol. I. London: J. M. Dent. 1901.

views never changed. What he hoped at fifteen he believed at forty, and so firmly set were his own opinions that he deemed any man a traitor who dared to advance. And this explains his constant quarrellings. His unalterable consistency, always a grievous fault, made him difficult to live with, because he was, so to say, an evil conscience to the waverer. When Coleridge and Wordsworth grew up, and corrected the wild imaginings of their youth, Hazlitt was furious; and as he found no excuse, so he could extend no forgiveness. In fact, the rejection of an opinion once held was to Hazlitt a grave outrage upon honour, which he proceeded to reprove with all the eloquence he might command. A keener sense of humour might have persuaded him that Coleridge's fancy could not be bound in chains, that so vague a philosophy could not but shift and change with the shifting breeze. But Hazlitt was inflexible and austere. There was a time when listening to Coleridge he was as delighted as though he had heard the music of the spheres. On this occasion "Poetry and Philosophy had met together, Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion." And then Coleridge composed a certain "Lay Sermon," and Hazlitt, wounded by his friend's defection, flouted and gibed with all the satire at his command. His ferocity is more creditable to his heart than to his head. It is justice carried to the pitch of injury; it is honesty exaggerated until it appears an intellectual dishonesty. Yet it is the failing of a high and narrow mind, and though we may deplore it, we cannot find it in our heart to condemn. Vice it may be, but it is vice always inclining to the side of virtue.

Moreover, though Hazlitt was incapable of envy—indeed, he contended in a dialogue with Northcote that no man was ever envious—he was Radical enough to dislike success. We know not where to match him, save in those *cénacles* of modern France, which refuse to see a grain of merit in what they term an *arriviste*. Now,

Coleridge and Wordsworth and Southey (especially Southey) were born *arrivistes* in spite of the revolutionary sentiments which they cherished in their youth; and for this reason, also, Hazlitt could not for long ally himself to them. The one splendid success of his time, to which he extended a loyal admiration, was the success of Napoleon; and he adored the Corsican chiefly because the Corsican started with all the odds against him, and trampled upon kings as well as upon the "Rights of Man."

Jacobin and Anti-Jacobin.

But though Hazlitt was a Radical, he was no Democrat. Wherever art and letters were concerned, he was even a stern reactionary. He hated utility, he hated progress, as bitterly as, in his phrase, Wordsworth hated conchology. He was an ardent champion of the classics, because he believed that education should not be practical, and because "the fine dream of our youth is best prolonged among the visionary objects of antiquity." Throughout his life he defended the past against the present with a splendid eloquence. With what a fine fury he attacked the commonplace critic, who is with us to-day, and who still speaks the same language which Hazlitt condemned! "Though he has an aversion to all new ideas," says Hazlitt, "he likes all new plans and matters-of-fact: the new Schools for All, the Penitentiary, the new Bedlam, the new Steam-Boats, the Gas-Lights, the new Patent Blacking." How well we know this monster, who will have nothing that is not new and shoddy and mechanical and American,—this monster, who hates all things that are not what he elegantly terms "up-to-date," and who believes that wealth and speed alone are sacred from reproach. But while Hazlitt detested progress, he respected all that was rare and aristocratic. When he listened to Northcote and Nollekens talking of Sir Joshua and Burke and Johnson, "the names of these great sons of memory," says he, "were in the room, and

they almost seemed to answer to them. Genius and fame flung a spell into the air." And while he loved all that was great and exalted, he hated whatever was common with a true Radical fury. He could not endure Wordsworth when he made heroes of pedlars and ploughmen. That, he said, "is getting into low company." And again: "The spirit of Jacobin poetry is rank egotism. We know an instance. It is of a person who founded a school of poetry in sheer humanity, on idiot boys and mad mothers, and on Simon Lee, the old huntsman. The secret of the Jacobin poetry and the anti-Jacobin politics of this writer is the same. His lyrical poetry was a cant of humanity about the commonest people, to level the great with the small; and his political poetry is a cant of loyalty, to level Bonaparte with kings and hereditary imbecility."

Hazlitt a partisan.

It is wild talk, but it is not the wild talk of the Radical; and if Hazlitt were a Jacobin in politics, no man was ever a fiercer anti-Jacobin in the arts. Yet we read even his 'Political Essays' with pleasure, because we realise that if he had no talent for politics, he was an incomparable controversialist. In brief, he looked at all things with the eye of a partisan; he described all things with the pen of a partisan; and what he said of Milton might most worthily be applied to himself. "There is a decided tone in Milton's descriptions," he wrote, "an eloquent dogmatism, as if he spoke from thorough conviction, which he probably derived from his spirit of partisanship." That is the best account of Hazlitt, in whom the spirit of partisanship was always burning, and who never spoke the idlest word save from "thorough conviction."

But politics were not the serious interest of his life. They were merely a reminiscence of a speculative boyhood spent among the Shropshire hills. What he best loved were books and men; and truly no man ever rightly loved books who loved not men better. And of books he

preferred the old. "I have more confidence in the dead than in the living," he said with perfect truth; and when the world chattered of a new masterpiece, he was content to take an old friend down from the shelf. The fact that Sir Walter Scott alone was able to tempt him from the past is proof enough that his Jacobin opinions did not affect his Anti-Jacobin tastes. But, like most other active controversialists, he was never an omnivorous reader. He was, with Samuel Johnson, a man of few books. He has told us what they are, and truly they are sufficient solace for the most deeply literate of men. Shakespeare and Milton, Fielding and Rousseau, Cervantes and Smollett—these were among his friends; and though he regretted that he had never made Clarendon and Froissart his own, he need not have deplored the gaps. Above all, he respected, as he should, the high calling of a reader. He knew how happy was the man who is admitted to the society of the august dead. "To have lived in the cultivation of an intimacy with such works," said he, "to have familiarly relished such names, is not to have lived quite in vain."

His love of books,

The best of his life, then, was spent among the few books which he studied again and again. By the time he was thirty his literary curiosity was dulled. But he never forgot the lessons of his youth, and when he began to write, which he did of necessity, and because he found no profit in painting, his mind was amply and generously stored. He wrote from a fulness of knowledge and with an energy of expression which have not often been surpassed. He neither corrected his proofs nor amended his judgments. There is not one of his essays which does not seem as though it were struck off at a blow. His style has the defects and qualities of his method. It is often slipshod and inaccurate; the words are sometimes tumbled down in grammatical confusion. But the meaning is never obscure, because Hazlitt always thought clearly; and the fault

of expression is a mechanical fault of haste and heedlessness. Above all, he was a master rather of the phrase than of the word. That is to say, he seems to have found his phrases ready made, and did not look about him for the words which should compose them. And his phrases, once they are made, cohere without particles. The logical thread of his argument is so tightly held, that he has no need of "buts" and "therefores," and the innumerable shifts of the inexpert; so that an essay of his contriving resembles the simple masonry of primitive times. The sentences fall into their places unattached, while the whole is as stable as those ancient walls whose blocks of stone fit and cohere without mortar. But, apart from its structure, there is a fire and dash in his style which defy analysis, and which proceed from a ripe mind and a vivid intelligence. He has less insight than Coleridge into general principles; he has not the imaginative subtlety which places Charles Lamb among the best critics of literature. But he possesses qualities of which Lamb and Coleridge knew nothing. None of his contemporaries could have penned the magnificent letter to Gifford, the best piece of chastisement known to literature. No other could have written of sport, of the theatre, and of life with the brilliance and spirit which were always his. And it is this wide knowledge and tireless energy which make the least of his essays not merely a criticism of literature but also a criticism of life.

and of life.

Literature was for him, as it should be for all, a kind of spring-board, whence he might leap to an intelligence of mankind. The impressions of life he corrected from literature; the impressions of literature found in his life their surest touchstone. He loved taverns and fives-courts, the theatre and the ring. He has sketched the best prize-fight known to letters, and he has set upon paper the actual game of Cavanagh the fives-player. The achievement of the Indian jugglers put him out of conceit with his own skill; and whatever

province of human energy lay before him, he surveyed with a perfect intelligence of its possibilities. For instance, he discoursed of Chubb's 'Tracts,' in which he found "a high gusto of polemical divinity," in precisely the same terms in which he discoursed of Bill Neate and Hickman. He knew the stage, as very few have understood that home of lost endeavour and false reputation. He is one of the few theatrical critics whose opinions still have a general application. His contrast of Pasta with Mars might be a comparison drawn to-day of Duse with Madame Bernhardt. "Pasta does not act the character," he says; "she is it, looks it, breathes it"; and no one who has seen Duse in "Cavalleria Rusticana," let us say, or in a comedy of Goldoni's, would hesitate to transfer the criticism. Madame Mars, on the other hand, is true not to human but to "French nature," and in this phrase Hazlitt, as though by prophecy, found the last word of criticism for Sarah Bernhardt. In brief, the simple truth of his judgments makes them valid beyond their day, and this, we suppose, is the highest tribute that admiration can ever pay to criticism.

The study of a Cockney.

Again, Hazlitt's interest in life gave him the keenest insight into character. Up and down his pages are scattered with a lavish hand such sketches as would have made the fortune of a dozen novelists. Here he recalls Theophrastus, there he is a premonition of Dickens. His character of the "Cockney," inspired, as he tells us, by Mr Blackwood, is not unworthy the hand that drew Sam Weller. They are not amiable figures, these Cockneys of Hazlitt's, and therein they differ from the illustrious "Samivel"; but they are none the less true, and their traits are gathered by the hand of a master. The "slender youth, with purple face and drooping head, nodding over a glass of gin-toddy, and breathing in tender accents 'There's nought so sweet on earth as Love's young dream,'" may be seen at Hampstead any Bank Holiday. But, most of

all, we like Mr Pinch, the Cockney fives-player, of whom the eminent Dr Goodman "could make nothing." The Doctor, being a purist, hated Pinch's game, which he found full of tricks and of "dirty mean ways." (We can match that objection on the Cricket Field to-day.) But, yet more than his game, the Doctor disliked Pinch's sanguine imperturbability. Nothing could shake his good esteem of himself. He had a ready (and foolish) answer pat to all emergencies. "It's impossible there should be any sympathy between you and me, Mr Pinch," said the irascible Doctor; "for as the poet says, 'How should the soul of Socrates inhabit the body of a stocking-weaver?'" "Ay," says he, "does the poet say so? *Then* the same to you, sir." The repartee is perfect, the very essence of Cockney impudence and Cockney fatuity. As Dr Goodman says, Mr Pinch would have posed the Devil with his "the same to you, sir"; and Hazlitt caught this Cockney to the life, the justice of his capture being proved by the fact that Pinch is still with us.

Nor did this curiosity of character ever exhaust the enthusiasm of William Hazlitt. His portrait of Northcote has but one rival in English literature—the Johnson of James Boswell. We would not hesitate for a moment to compare him with the highest; and it is entirely due to Hazlitt's splendid presentation that James Northcote, painter of historical masterpieces, is alive to-day. He loved that thing of "air and spirit" with a love which Northcote's vanity did not permit him to return, and he seized his conversation upon paper with an infinite skill. But Northcote is not his only portrait. Remember the sketch of Nollekens, the man who "seemed, by time and labour, to have *wrought* himself to stone." Better still, remember the touching and beautiful gaiety wherewith he drew the portrait of Cosway, that child of imagination, who dwelt always in a fairy palace. "Fancy bore sway in him," said Hazlitt; "and so

Hazlitt's portraiture.

vivid were his impressions that they included the substances of things in them. The agreeable and the true with him were one." Truly, Cosway was made of gossamer, and Hazlitt touched him with so light a finger that he did not disturb a single web. Thrice happy man! To live in a paradise of imagination; to be understood by his friend; and to be sketched by his wife, a worthy companion, as *toujours riant, toujours gai!* It is such creatures as these that bring happiness to the world: and again we owe Hazlitt a debt of gratitude for leaving us this picture of Richard Cosway —always smiling, always gay.

But when he allows his Radicalism to guide him, he tempts you to instant disagreement. His character of Pitt is nothing less than an outrage; but it is an outrage one would not like to have missed, because it helps to explain the infamy of our pro-Boers, who attack their Government in precisely the same terms reserved by Hazlitt and his friends for the man who was engaged in the salvation of England. To Hazlitt Pitt was not so much a monster as an imbecile, and his dislike is easily understood. He regarded the minister exclusively from the point of view of literature. He read his speeches, and found (which was half-true) that he did not trouble to say anything. Of course the man who confounds eloquence with statesmanship—and Hazlitt was guilty of this primitive confusion—would turn naturally to Burke or Fox. And Hazlitt being in his heart no politician at all, forgot that the essence of politics is action. What would he have said to Bill Neate, if that eminent scrapper had delivered an oration upon the art of self-defence, instead of plugging Hickman's eye? What would he have thought of Cavanagh, if, instead of doubling his fist and beating the stranger, he had given him a brief essay upon the theory of the game? Should he not, then, have asked of William Pitt, what he asked of his favourite sportsmen, the superior faculty

of achieving his purpose? Of course he should; and then he would have discovered that Pitt was indifferent in speech because he was supreme in action, and we should not have had that experiment in shallow politics which Hazlitt terms "a character of Pitt."

Whig and Tory.

Yet, despite his Whiggery, there is but one man of letters with whom we would compare William Hazlitt, and that man is Samuel Johnson. What Boswell has told us of his hero, Hazlitt has told us of himself, and in each case we have an ample record of taste and opinion. At first sight it seems a paradox to bring them together; but a closer examination proves the paradox not extravagant. In literature Hazlitt, like Johnson, was a fierce Anti-Jacobin; Johnson, like Hazlitt, esteemed the past rather than the present, and, like Hazlitt again, preferred lively thought and vigorous comment to the reading of popular literature. Had they met they might have fought, but they would both have enjoyed the fight; and in the end Johnson would have appreciated Hazlitt as he appreciated Wilkes. In each was a strain of manhood strong enough to obscure the unessential. These two men, indeed, are still the glory of our state; and if we could compel a dialogue of the dead, we would as lief listen to Samuel Johnson and William Hazlitt discussing the high matters of life and literature as to any pair we can readily recall. They would quarrel, as what two strenuous spirits would not? But they would also find points of agreement, and one knows not which would win in the dispute—the short, fiery fusillade of Hazlitt or the heavy roar of Samuel's artillery.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS